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THE

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THE PATH OF ISRAEL,

OR

A BRIDGMENT OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES:

FOR THE USE OF

THE YOUTH OF OUR NATION.

By J. ENNERY,

OF STRASBURG.

REVISED AND CORRECTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION.

יבש חציר נבל ציץ ודבר אלהינו יקום לעולם:

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever."—ISAIAH xl. 8.

PART FIRST.

CONTAINING THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES.

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ADDRESS TO THE ISRAELITES

BY THE

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE.

In presenting the fifth number of the Miscellany to the public, we cannot let it pass without addressing an earnest request to all lovers of Jewish literature, to cast a serious look upon the work accomplished during the first year of the existence of the American Jewish Publication Society. Commencing as it did in an experiment of a few persons, who justly deemed that a united effort of the Jews would enable them to place a mass of good reading within the reach of even the poorest families; they have succeeded thus far in issuing five works, and in paying for the same from the contribution of one dollar by the regular members, the sale of a limited number of the works, and a few donations, from rightly disposed persons, though none of these contributions amounted to more than ten dollars. Four of the works are reprints from English books; but the present is a translation from the French, of the teacher at the congregation school at Strasburg; and all of them, even the English, were nearly inaccessible to the general reader, except the first, Caleb Asher, from the high price at which they are held, and the smallness of the original editions. But not alone have we been enabled to pay for all the publications, we have also a full surplus of one hundred and fifty dollars to defray the expenses of the current year. There can therefore be not the least doubt that, if we are properly supported by subscriptions and donations, we shall be able to increase the means of mental culture among us, whilst at the same time the burden will not be felt by any one; as the annual sum of *one* dollar is certainly too inappreciably small for nearly all American Israelites, to cause them the least inconvenience. We think that money spent in this

manner will do much more to elevate the taste of our people, than all gifts of charity, though we should be the last to do aught to destroy or impair the field of action of our many benevolent institutions. We only plead for the mind, and hope that it will not be neglected, when physical wants are so generally provided for.

Impressed with these sentiments, which we trust are those of nearly all our readers, we call upon all to stand by Jewish literature, and to foster the Society which was formed for no other end than to enable all to obtain religious books, and such reading as will *not* chill in them the ardour for their faith; and on the other hand, to open a field for Jewish talent, and enable those in whom has been placed wisdom to speak to their brothers through the means of the press, upon the concerns of eternal life.

All lovers of Judaism, especially all our ministers, are fully as much interested as the members of the committee. We therefore call upon them in the name of the faith which we honour, to give to this enterprise all their own individual aid, and to urge upon their friends to do so likewise. It is but a small sum which is asked of each individual; but the many little contributions will swell into a large amount; and with the blessing of Heaven, the Society will be enabled to scatter much good among all classes of Israelites, and become a means of salvation to many a thirsting spirit.

Isaac Leeser, Chairman.
A. Hart,
S. Solis.

Philadelphia, Jan. 4th, 5607.

PREFACE

OF

THE PUBLICATION COMMITTEE.

It affords us sincere gratification to present to our members the first portion of "Le Sentier D'Israel," by J. Ennery, translated from the French by Mr. A. I. H. Bernal, the Hebrew teacher of the congregation Mikve Israel, of Philadelphia. The author intended to furnish a Bible for the young Israelites of France; and we thought that we could not render a greater service to American Jews, than by presenting it to them in an English dress. It will answer both as a school book and a manual for family reading, and is eminently fitted to serve as an introductory preparation for a profitable use of the entire Holy Scriptures. It gives the great events of antiquity in almost the very words of the sacred text, free from all those doctrinal allusions, which render the works of a similar kind, produced by non-Israelites, entirely unfitted for our use. It is high time, indeed, that we should educate ourselves the mind of our children; hitherto too much sway has been allowed to views which are the products of foreign soils; and nothing can aid so much in this work of regeneration, as the blessed words which were written for our instruction. Hence the reader will understand that the retention of Scriptural words and phrases was done on purpose; and condensation was only admitted, where the entire passages were considered too long for the young inquirer.

We deem it also proper to state that the work has received the thorough revision of our committee; but occasionally the peculiar versions of the author were retained, where it was thought that they expounded the sacred text better than the views of others.

For the present we give only the history of the Pentateuch; and hope to issue the remainder at a future day.

Philadelphia, December, 5607.

N. B. The present number was delayed on account of the sickness of the Chairman of our committee. Subscribers are notified that with this terminate the publications of the first year of the society; they are therefore earnestly requested to renew their subscriptions, and if they please, their donations, by addressing the corresponding secretary,

Isaac Leeser,
Philadelphia.

THE PATH OF ISRAEL.

GENESIS בראשית

I. The Creation. Power, and Wisdom of God.

"How great, O Lord, are Thy works; Thy thoughts are exceeding profound."—*Psalm* xcii. 5.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and all which they contain, in six days. God said, Let there be light, and there was light. God then made the large expanse of sky which extends above the earth, and called it heaven. He gathered the waters together, so that they formed the seas, and he separated them from the earth. Afterwards God caused to spring up from the earth trees, fruits, and plants of every kind. Then he placed in the expanse of heaven the two great luminaries, the sun and the moon, and innumerable stars, to distinguish between day and night, between light and darkness, and to give light upon the earth: and that they might be as signs for seasons, for days, and for years. The waters were then commanded to bring forth fishes of all kinds, and all the birds which fly in the air. On the sixth day also, He caused the earth to bring forth cat-

tle, beasts of the field and creeping things, each after its kind. It was only after this, and on the sixth day, that He created man from the dust of the earth; He breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living creature. God created the man and the woman, and they were called Adam and Chavvah (Eve*). And the Lord then blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heaven, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. God then viewed all that He had made, and pronounced it very good. On the seventh day, He ceased from His labour, and blessed that day, and declared it holy.

II. Sin. Danger of Temptation.

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not; walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path."—*Proverbs* i. 10, 15.

The Eternal God planted a garden in Eden, towards the east, and he placed therein Adam and Eve to cultivate and to keep it. God had caused to spring up therein every kind of tree that was agreeable to the sight and good for food. The Tree of Life was in the midst of the garden, as was also the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou

* Adam signifies in Hebrew, *earth;* Chavvah, *living,* that is to say, the *mother of all living.*

shalt not eat; for from the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Now the serpent, who was more cunning than all the beasts of the field, persuaded the woman, that by eating of that (forbidden) fruit, she would become like unto God. She yielded to the temptation and ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, she then offered some thereof unto her husband, and he also ate thereof. Their disobedience displeased the Lord, who drove them out of the garden, saying to the man, "In sorrow shalt thou cultivate the ground, in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou return unto the earth whence thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

III. Cain and Abel. Seth. Death of Adam.

A. M. 930.

A good heart is grateful and generous. Jealousy and anger rule in the heart of the wicked. Envy leads to crime.

"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is His delight."—*Proverbs* xv. 8.

Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. The eldest, Cain, who was a tiller of the ground, offered unto the Lord an offering of the fruits of the earth. Abel, who was a shepherd, offered the fattest of the first-born of his flock. The Lord accepted the offering of Abel; but unto Cain, and unto his offering, He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his face was cast down. And God said unto him, Why art thou wroth, and why is thy face cast down? if thou doest well, thou shalt be received with favour; and if thou doest not well, sin awaiteth thee

at the door, and it seeketh to entrap thee; but thou canst rule over it. Nevertheless, finding himself one day in the field with his brother Abel, Cain rose upon him and slew him. And the Eternal God then called unto him, saying, Where is Abel, thy brother? and he replied, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? And the Eternal said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. Now be thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive the blood of thy brother from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its strength: a wanderer and a fugitive shalt thou be on the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, Thou hast banished me from the face of the earth, and from Thy face shall I be hid; and if I become a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, whoever findeth me will slay me. And the Eternal set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, to the east of Eden. One of his descendants was named Lamech: he had three sons, Jabal, the first dweller in tents, and a roving shepherd; Jubal, the inventor of the harp and dulcimer; and Tubal Cain, the first artificer in copper and iron. Adam had afterwards another son, who was named Seth, and also several other sons and daughters, and he died at the age of nine hundred and thirty years. Methuselah attained the most advanced age of all the descendants of Seth. He lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years.

IV. Noah. The Deluge.

A. M. 1655.

"Observe the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked is ruin."—*Psalm* xxxvii. 37, 38.

The human race, as it increased on the earth, became corrupt in its manners; and God saw that the wickedness of men was great, and that all the imaginations of their heart tended continually unto evil. Noah alone found grace in the sight of the Lord; for he was upright and pious, and walked according to the will of God. And the Lord said unto him, The ruin of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them, and I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee then an ark, three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits broad, and thirty cubits high: and I will establish my covenant with thee: and thou shalt enter into the ark, thou, thy wife, thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Thou shalt also take therein with thee seven pair of every beast and bird that is clean, but of the unclean only two pair; also two of every kind of creeping thing, to preserve the race upon the earth; thou shalt also take therein all kinds of food for thee and for them. For in seven days, I will cause it to rain upon the earth during forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy every living creature that I have created from off the face of the earth. Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him; and he went into the ark, with his wife, his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and their

wives. Now, in the six hundredth year of the life of Noah, in the seventeenth day of the second month, the waters of the deluge inundated the earth. The rain descended during forty days and forty nights, and the waters increased so greatly that they covered the highest mountains under the heaven. Every living creature then perished, both man and beast, the creeping things, and the fowls of the heaven: there remained alive only Noah and those that were with him in the ark. In the eleventh month after the flood had commenced, Noah sent forth a dove to discover whether the waters had abated from off the surface of the earth; but the dove, finding no rest for the sole of its foot, returned unto Noah into the ark; as the waters still covered the earth, he waited then seven days, and again sent it forth, and it returned towards evening, and lo! an olive-leaf was in its mouth; thus he knew that the waters had abated from off the earth. Waiting yet another seven days, he sent out the dove the third time, but it returned not any more unto him. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and he beheld that the ground was dry; and he then came forth with his family and all that were therein. And he built an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord accepted the sacrifice, and blessed Noah and his sons, saying unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth: into your hands are delivered every thing that moveth on the earth and the fish of the sea. But the flesh, with the life thereof, that is the blood, shall ye not eat. Your blood, which is your life, will I also surely require. Whosoever shed-

deth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of the Lord made He man. The Lord then said to Noah, I have placed my bow in the cloud as a sign of an eternal covenant between me and you, and every living creature on the earth, that the waters shall never more become a flood to destroy all flesh. Noah was a husbandman, and was the first that planted a vineyard. He died at the age of nine hundred and fifty years.

V. The Tower of Babel. Confusion of Languages. Dispersion.

A. M. 1990.

Pride produceth discord.

"Except the Lord build the house, it is in vain that its builders toil thereon."—*Psalm* cxxvii. 1.

The descendants of the sons of Noah were numerous, and became the founders of the various tribes and nations; yet all of them spoke one language and had one manner of speech. As they journeyed from the East, they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they sojourned there. And they said one to another, Let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven, and thus make unto ourselves a name, that we be not dispersed over the face of all the earth. But the pride of their undertaking displeased the Lord, and He confounded their language, so that they understood no more one another's speech, and He scattered them over the face of all the earth. Thus they ceased building the city, which was thence called Babel, meaning Confusion.

VI. Abraham. Through him the Nations acquired the knowledge of the Only God. His submission to the Divine Will. His love of peace.

A. M. 2022.

"A dry morsel and quietness is better than feasting in a house full of strife."—*Prov.* xvii. 1.

Terah, of the family of Shem, begat Abraham, Nahor, and Haran, and the last begat Lot. And the Lord said unto Abraham, Go out from the land of thy birth, and thy father's house, and go into the land which I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation; I will bless thee and exalt thy name. Abraham departed according to the command of the Lord; and took with him Sarai, his wife, Lot, his brother's son, and all his household, unto the land of Canaan, where they arrived. Abraham pitched his tents to the east of Beth-El. He built there an altar in honour of the Lord, and taught in the name of the Eternal One. Abraham became very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold, in servants and in camels. And as he was returning from Egypt, where he had sojourned during a famine, into the land of Canaan, disputes arose between the herdsmen of Abraham and the herdsmen of Lot; for the latter, who journeyed with Abraham, had also much cattle, flocks, and tents, and the land was not able to support them, so that they could no longer dwell together. Abraham then said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me, between my herdsmen and thine, for we are of one family and almost brothers; separate thyself from

me; if thou wilt to the left, I will go to the right; if thou preferrest to go to the right, I will take the left. And they separated from each other. Abraham remained in the land of Canaan, and Lot chose the plain of Jordan, which was very fertile, and he pitched his tents near Sodom. But the inhabitants of Sodom were wicked, and hardened sinners before the Lord. Now Abraham pitched his tents in the vale of Mamre, near Hebron, and built there an altar in honour of the Eternal Lord.

VII. Disinterestedness of Abraham.

"The avaricious man troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live."—*Prov.* xv. 27.

About this time, a war broke out between the kings of the different cities of the country, and Abraham learned that Lot, his brother's son, had been taken prisoner. Immediately he armed his trained servants, three hundred and eighteen in number, and pursued, during the night, the kings who had taken his kinsman prisoner. He overtook and smote them, and he brought back all the spoil which they had made, and liberated Lot, with his goods, as also the women and the children. Malchi-Zedek, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; he was a priest of the Most High God. And he blessed Abraham, and said, Blessed be Abraham by the Most High God, the Creator of heaven and earth. And the King of Sodom said unto Abraham, Give me the persons, and take the booty to thyself. But Abraham answered him, I have sworn by the Most High God, that I will not take even a thread, or the lacing of a shoe,

that is thine; but the men that went with me may take their portion.

VIII. Faith of Abraham. The precept of Circumcision.

"Trust in the 'Lord with all thy heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."—*Prov.* iii. 5.

After these events, the word of the Lord came unto Abraham in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield; thy reward shall be exceeding great. And Abraham said, O Lord God, what wilt thou give me? I am childless; to me thou hast given no seed, and the steward of my house, Eleazer of Damascus, will be my heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him again, saying, This one shall not be thy heir, but he that shall come forth out of thy own bowels, he shall be thy heir. And He brought him forth abroad, and said: Look now unto heaven, and count the stars, if thou canst number them, thus shall thy seed be. Abraham believed in the Lord, who reckoned it to him for righteousness.

Now when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Walk before me and be perfect, and I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations. My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And I will give unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee, the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. This is the sign of my covenant, which ye shall keep: every male child among

you that is eight days old, shall be circumcised, and it shall be a token of the covenant between you and me. And Abraham prostrated himself before the Lord, and supplicated the Lord for his son Ishmaël, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, had borne unto him, and he said, O Lord, may Ishmaël live before thee.

IX. Hospitality of Abraham.

"He that giveth unto the poor shall never lack; but he that turneth away his eyes shall have many a curse."—*Proverbs*, xxviii. 27.

During the heat of the day, whilst Abraham was sitting at the door of his tent, in the vale of Mamre, he perceived three men not far from him, and he ran to meet them. He bowed himself to the ground, and said to them, If I have found grace in thy sight, pass not away, I beseech thee, from thy servant: let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will bring a morsel of bread, that ye may refresh yourselves, after which ye may pass on. And they answered, Do as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal; knead it, and make cakes. Then he hastened to dress a young calf: he took butter and milk, which he placed before them, also the calf he had dressed; and he stood by them beneath the tree, and and they did eat. And one of them said unto him, I will return unto thee at this time next year, and Sarah thy wife shall have a son. Now Sarah, who was at the tent-door, overheard this, and she laughed inwardly, saying, Shall I bear a child, now I am so old? But he answered

her, Is any thing too wonderful for the Lord? At the appointed time next year, I will return unto thee, and Sarah shall have a son.

X. Abraham intercedes for the Inhabitants of Sodom.

"The Lord is far from the wicked; but He heareth the prayer of the righteous."—*Proverbs* xv. 29.

The truly pious man has compassion on erring sinners; he prays for them, and tries to save them.

The men then rose up from there, and went towards Sodom, and Abraham went with them, to accompany them on the way. The Lord said, The cry against Sodom and Gomorrah is very great, and their sin is grievous. If they have acted according to the cry which hath come unto me, they shall be destroyed; if not, I will spare them. The men went toward Sodom to destroy it; but Abraham stood before the Lord, and said, O Judge of all the earth, wilt Thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt Thou not forgive the place for the sake of the fifty righteous? Shall the just die with the wicked? And he proceeded, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, whilst I am but dust and ashes; peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty: wilt Thou destroy all the city for lack of the five? And the Lord said, I will not destroy it, if I find therein forty and five righteous. Abraham then said, O Eternal God, be not angry with Thy servant, and I will yet speak: perhaps there may be found thirty, twenty, or even ten just men. And the Lord said, I will

not destroy the city if I find therein ten righteous men. Abraham then returned to his place.

XI. Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

"The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked and him that loveth violence His spirit hateth. Upon the wicked will He rain live coals, fire and brimstone; the raging tempest is the portion of their cup."—*Psalm* xi. 5, 6.

The two angels arrived at Sodom towards evening. Lot, having perceived them, rose up to meet them, and bowing himself with his face to the ground, said, Turn in, I pray you, my lords, into your servant's house; tarry all night, and ye shall rise early, and go your ways. They answered at first, No, we will remain in the streets all night. But he pressed them greatly, and they entered into his house: and he made them a feast, and they did eat. Now before they lay down, the men of Sodom, young and old, from all the quarters of the city, encompassed the house around; they called unto Lot, saying, Where are the men who came unto thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. Lot went to the door to them, and said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly; leave these men, since they have come under the shadow of my roof. But they replied, Begone: and they added, This man came among us to sojourn, and he will needs make himself a judge; now will we deal worse with thee than with them; and they attempted to seize him, and break open the door. Then the two men extended their hands, and pulled Lot into the house to them; and they smote the men that were at the door

of the house, both great and small, with blindness, so that they wearied themselves to find the door. Then the men said unto Lot, Get out of this place, with all that thou hast, for we are about to destroy this place, because the cry against them is great before the Lord, and the Eternal hath sent us to destroy it. And when the dawn appeared, the two men seized his hand, that of his wife, and those of his two daughters, because the Lord had mercy upon them, and led them out, and set them without the city. And they said to Lot, Hasten, escape for thy life, look not behind thee, stay not on the whole plain, but escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. Lot, with his family, took refuge in Zoar. And the Lord rained brimstone and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus the Lord overthrew all those cities, and all that plain, all the inhabitants of those cities, and even that which grew upon the ground.

XII. Birth of Isaac. Hagar and Ishmael.

"The Lord is nigh unto the broken-hearted; and saveth those who are of a contrite spirit."—*Psalm* xxxiv. 19.

The Lord remembered His promise unto Sarah, and she bore a son unto Abraham in his old age, at the time which the Lord had appointed. Abraham named the son whom Sarah had born unto him Isaac (Yitzchak). When Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as the Lord had commanded him. And the child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Ishmael, the son of Hagar, the Egyptian, mocked thereat. And Sarah said

unto Abraham, Drive out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of that bondwoman shall not inherit with my son, with Isaac. Now this was grievous unto Abraham, on account of his son; but the Lord said unto him, Be not grieved on account of the lad, and for thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a great nation, because he is thy seed. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, took bread and a bottle of water, placed them on Hagar's shoulder, and sent her away with the child; and she departed and went astray in the wilderness of Beër-sheba. And when the water was spent from the bottle, she cast the child under one of the shrubs, and seated herself a good way off, for she said, Let me not see the death of the child; and she lifted up her voice, and wept. The Lord heard the voice of the child, and an angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, saying, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not, for the Lord hath heard the voice of the child. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thy hand; for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

XIII. Sacrifice of Isaac. Devotedness of Abraham. A. M. 2074.

"Be not afraid, neither be thou cast down; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."—*Joshua* i. 9.

It came to pass after these events, that the Lord proved Abraham, and he said unto him, Abraham; and he answered, Here am I. And the Lord said to him, Take thy only son, whom thou lovest, Isaac, and get thee unto the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains which I will indicate to thee. Abraham arose early, saddled his ass, took with him his two servants and his son Isaac, and split the wood for the burnt-offering, and journeyed towards the place of which God had spoken to him. The third day he saw the place afar off. Then he said unto his servants, Tarry you here with the ass, while I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and then we will return unto you. Abraham took the wood for the burnt-offering, and placed it upon Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife, and they continued their journey together. And Isaac spoke unto his father, and said, Father, behold, here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering? And Abraham replied, The Lord will provide himself with a lamb for the burnt-offering, my son; and they journeyed on together. And when they had arrived at the place which the Lord had made known to him, Abraham built an altar, arranged the wood, bound his son Isaac, and placed him on the altar upon the wood. Abraham extended his hand,

and laid hold of the knife to slay his son. But an angel of the Lord called unto him from heaven, saying, Abraham! Abraham! And he answered, Here am I. And the angel said unto him, Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and beheld a ram caught by its horns in a thicket behind him; and he took the ram, and offered it as a burnt-offering in the stead of his son. And an angel of the Lord called unto Abraham from heaven a second time, saying, Thus saith the Lord, By myself have I sworn, that, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thy only one, I will bless thee, and multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand upon the shore of the sea, and thy descendants shall possess the strongholds of their enemies; in thy posterity shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. Then Abraham returned to his servants; and they rose up and went together to Beër-sheba; and Abraham dwelt in Beër-sheba.

XIV. Death and Interment of Sarah.

Now Sarah was one hundred and twenty-seven years old, and she died in Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. And Abraham arose from his dead, and went to seek Ephron, who dwelt among the children of Heth, in order to buy of him his field for a burying-place. And Abraham bought of Ephron the cave of Machpelah, with the

field which is before Mamre, in the country of Canaan, for four hundred shekels of silver. Then Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which then became the property of Abraham for his burying-place.

XV. The Marriage of Isaac.

"Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised."—*Proverbs* xxxi. 30.

Abraham was advanced in years, and the Lord had prospered him in every thing. And Abraham said unto the eldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he possessed, Swear to me by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou wilt not take unto my son Isaac a wife from among the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my country, to the place of my birth, and take thence a wife unto my son Isaac; but beware that thou bring not my son thither again. The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my birth, and who swore unto me saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land, He will send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife for my son from there. And the servant swore unto him according to all that he had spoken. And the servant took the camels of his master, and went to Aram-Naharayim (Mesopotamia), to the city of Nahor; and he caused the camels to kneel down without the city, near a well of water, at the time of evening, at the time the women go out to draw water. And he said, O Lord, God of my

master Abraham, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. Grant, that the damsel, to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also, be the one Thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac, and thereby shall I know that Thou hast shown kindness unto my master. Scarcely had he done speaking, when Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah, wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her pitcher upon her shoulder. The damsel was very fair, and she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water out of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord; and she lowered her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him to drink. And when he had finished drinking, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hastened, emptied her pitcher into the trough, and drew water for all his camels. And when the camels had done drinking, the man took a ring and two bracelets of gold, and said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee, is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge this night? She answered, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore unto Nahor: and, she added, We have straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in; and the man gave her the gold ring and bracelets. Then he bowed his head, and worshipped the Lord, and said, Praised be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who hath not

withheld His kindness and His truth from my master; I am in the path on which the Lord hath led me, even to the house of my master's brother. The maiden ran and told all that had happened, in her mother's house. Laban, Rebecca's brother, ran to the man unto the well and said, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. And the man went into the house, and they ungirded the camels, and they gave them straw and provender, and also water to wash his feet, and the feet of the men that were with him. And there was set meat before him to eat; but he said I will not eat until I have spoken what I have to say: and they said, Speak. And he spoke thus, I am Abraham's servant; and the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he hath become great. He hath given him flocks and herds, gold and silver, men-servants, and maid-servants, camels and asses. And Sarah, my master's wife, bore him a son after she had become old; and he hath given him all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take unto my son a wife from among the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my father's house, to my kindred, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from there. And I came this day unto the well, and I said, O Lord, God of my master Abraham, if now thou wouldst prosper my way which I go; behold, I stand by the well of water; let it come to pass that the maiden to whom I shall say, Give me I pray thee a little water to drink, and she shall reply, Drink, and I will also give thy camels to drink, be the one thou hast appointed for my master's son. And

before I had done speaking in my heart, behold Rebecca came out with her pitcher upon her shoulder; and she went down unto the well and drew water: and I said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water out of thy pitcher to drink; and she lowered her pitcher speedily, and said, Drink, and I will give also unto thy camels to drink. And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? and she replied, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor. Then I prostrated myself before the Lord, and I praised the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son. And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right or to the left. And Laban and Bethuel answered, The thing cometh from the Lord; we cannot speak unto thee good or bad. Behold, Rebecca is before thee, take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath declared. As soon as Abraham's servant heard their words, he prostrated himself on the earth, before the Lord. Then he brought forth vessels of gold and vessels of silver, and raiment, and gave them unto Rebecca, and unto her brother and her mother he also gave precious things; and they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and stayed there all night. When they rose up in the morning, the servant said, Send me away unto my master. But Rebecca's brother and mother said, Let the damsel tarry with us a year, or even ten months, after that she shall go. And he said unto them, Hinder me not, since the Lord hath prospered my ways; send me away that I may go unto my master. And they said,

We will call the damsel, and let her decide. They then called Rebecca, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? and she said, I will go. They then blessed Rebecca, and said, Thou art our sister, become the mother of thousands of myriads, and may thy seed possess the gates of their enemies. Thus Rebecca and her servants departed with the man. Now Isaac who had gone out to walk in the fields towards evening, lifted up his eyes and he saw camels coming. Rebecca perceived Isaac and said to the servant, Who is that man that cometh towards us in the field? The servant said, It is my master. She took a veil and covered herself. The servant told to Isaac all that had occurred. And Isaac brought Rebecca into the tent of Sarah, his mother, and she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was consoled for the loss of his mother.

XVI. Death of Abraham. Birth of Esau and Jacob.

A. M. 2108.

"The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants; and none of those that trust in him shall be condemned."—*Psalm* xxxiv. 23.

"Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers."—*Proverbs* xvii. 6.

The years of the life of Abraham were one hundred and seventy five years; and Abraham died at a good old age, full of days; and was gathered to his fathers. And his sons, Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field which Abraham had bought of Ephron, and in which he had buried Sarah his wife.

Isaac walked in the ways of his father, and the Lord blessed him; and Rebecca bore unto him two sons, twins. One was named Esau, and the other Jacob. And when they grew up, Esau became a skilful hunter, a man roaming in the fields; but Jacob was a pious man, and dwelt peaceably in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison; but Rebecca loved Jacob.

The Lord was with Isaac, and prospered him, and he became great; he had flocks and herds and numerous servants. During a famine Isaac went to sojourn in Gerar, and thence he went to Beër-sheba. And the Lord appeared unto him one night, and said unto him, I am the God of thy father Abraham, fear not, for I am with thee, and I will bless thee and multiply thy seed for the sake of my servant Abraham. Isaac built an altar, and invoked the name of the Lord, and he pitched his tent there, and his servants dug a well. Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, came from Gerar to Isaac, with a company of his friends, and Phichol, the chief of his army, to make an alliance with him. Isaac prepared a feast for them, and they passed the night with him. The next morning they took an oath one to the other; and then Isaac sent them away, and they departed in peace.

When Isaac was become old, his eyes became dim, so that he could not see; and he said unto Esau, Take thy arms, and get me some venison, and prepare me savoury meat, that I may eat, that my soul may bless thee before I die. Now whilst Esau was in the fields, Rebecca clothed Jacob in Esau's garments, and gave him a savoury dish, which she had prepared of the flesh of two kids, to carry in unto Isaac. Isaac recognised not Jacob, ate of the food and

blessed him. Esau hated Jacob on account of this blessing, and he said, The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob. And these words of Esau were reported to Rebecca, and she said unto Jacob, Thy brother seeketh to slay thee; listen to my voice, my son, arise, flee thee to Haran, to my brother Laban; sojourn with him some time, until the anger of thy brother shall have passed away, and he shall have forgotten that which thou hast done unto him; then will I send and take thee home from there. Isaac also called Jacob, blessed him, gave him counsel, and said, Take not a wife from the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father, and take thee a wife from there of the daughters of Laban, thy mother's brother. And may the Almighty God bless thee and make thee fruitful, and cause thee to multiply, and become a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed after thee, that thou mayest inherit the land in which thou sojournest, which the Lord hath given unto Abraham.

XVII. Jacob's Journey. His arrival at Haran. His Marriage.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about those who fear Him, and delivereth them."

"O, fear the Lord, ye His saints, for there is no want to those who fear Him."—*Psalm* xxxiv. 8, 10.

Jacob, in obedience to his father and his mother's wishes, departed from Bëer-sheba: and arriving at a

certain spot, the sun having set, he passed the night there. He took a stone, placed it under his head and laid himself down in that place. And he saw in a dream a ladder standing upon the earth, the top of which reached heaven, and he beheld the angels of God ascending and descending thereon. And the Lord stood on the top thereof, and said unto him, I am the Lord, the God of thy father Abraham, and the God of thy father Isaac, the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed: and thy seed shall be numberless as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. For I am with thee, and will preserve thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again unto this land; for I will not leave thee until I have accomplished all that I have spoken unto thee. And Jacob awoke from his sleep, and said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How awful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, took the stone which he had placed under his head, set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on its top, and named the place Beth-el (that is, *house of God*). And Jacob made a vow there, saying, If God will be with me, and keep me in the way that I am going, and give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I return in peace to my father's house: then shall the Lord be my God; and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that Thou wilt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto

thee. Then Jacob continued his journey, and came to the land of the people of the East. In a field he beheld a well, and three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well they watered the flocks; now there was a great stone upon the mouth of the well. Thither therefore all the flocks used to be gathered together; when they rolled the stone from the well, and watered the flocks, and afterwards they rolled the stone back again to its place. Jacob said unto the shepherds, My brethren, whence are ye? They answered, We are from Haran. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban, the son of Nahor? and they answered, We know him. He said, Is he well? They answered, He is well, and behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the flock. Whilst they were thus conversing, Rachel drew nigh with her father's flock, for she was a shepherdess. As soon as Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, he drew nigh, and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered the flock of Laban: and he told Rachel that he was her father's nephew, the son of his sister Rebecca; and she ran and told her father. When Laban heard of the arrival of Jacob, he ran towards him, embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house: and Jacob told unto Laban all his history. After Jacob had abode with him one month, Laban said unto him, Because thou art my relative, shouldst thou serve me for nought? Tell me, what shall be thy wages? Now Jacob loved Rachel, and he said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter: and Laban replied, It is better that I give her to thee than that I should give her to any other

man; abide then with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days, so great was the love he had for her. And when the time had expired, Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. And he took Leah, his eldest daughter and gave her unto Jacob, and he gave her Zilpah for her handmaid. And Jacob said unto Laban, Was it not for Rachel that I have served thee? why hast thou deceived me? And Laban said, It must not be so done in our place, to give away the younger before the elder. Fulfil her week, and we will give thee the other likewise, for the service which thou shalt serve me yet seven other years. And Jacob consented, and when the wedding-week of Leah was passed, Laban gave him also his daughter Rachel for wife, and he gave unto Rachel, Bilhah for her handmaid.*

Leah bore six sons unto Jacob; to wit, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulon, and one daughter, named Dinah. Zilpah, her handmaid, bore him also two sons, Gad and Asher, and Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, likewise bore two sons, Dan and Naphtali. Rachel bore him in the same place one son, who was named Joseph.

* It was the custom of the times and the country, that a man was permitted to take several wives at once.

XVIII. Secret departure of Jacob. Laban pursues him. Their reconciliation.

"Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established."—*Prov.* xvi. 3.

Jacob served Laban yet six years more for cattle as his wages. Thus he acquired much cattle, men and maid-servants, camels, and asses. And he overheard Laban's sons saying, Jacob hath taken all that was our father's, and from our father's property hath he obtained all these great riches. Jacob also saw that Laban looked not on him as favourably as he was wont to do. Now the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, to the place of thy birth, and I will be with thee. Jacob did as the Lord had commanded him; he arose, placed his wives and children on camels, and carried away all his cattle and the goods that he had acquired at Padan-aram, to return to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan. Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Jacob was therefore enabled to escape, and he directed his steps towards Gileäd. When Laban heard that Jacob was fled, he pursued him, and overtook him at the end of seven days in the mount of Gileäd. And Laban said unto Jacob, Why didst thou flee away secretly, and take away my daughters as captives of war? Why didst thou not tell me? I would have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with timbrels and with harps: and thou didst not even suffer me to kiss my children. Thou hast acted foolishly in so doing. And Jacob said, I feared thee, that thou wouldst take thy daughters by

force from me. Twenty years have I been with thee; fourteen years did I serve thee for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle. That which was torn by beasts, I never brought unto thee, but bore the loss myself, and from my hands didst thou require what was stolen by day or by night. During the day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night; and sleep fled my eyes; and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Unless the God of my fathers, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, thou wouldst surely have sent me away empty. But the Lord hath witnessed my labour, and the heavy work of my hands, and he decided yesterday.* And Laban answered, These daughters are mine, these children are mine, these cattle are mine, and all that thou seest is mine; yet what can I do unto these my daughters this day, or to their children whom they have borne? Come, let us make a covenant, which shall be a witness between us. And thus, when we are no longer together, if thou afflict my daughters, it will not be a man, but God who will bear witness between thee and me. They erected a monument of stones on the mount of Gileäd, and called it Gal-ed, Heap of Testimony. Then Jacob offered a sacrifice upon the mount, and invited Laban and his relatives to eat with him. They ate, and tarried all night on the mount. In the morning, Laban arose, kissed his grandsons and his daughters, and blessed them, and he departed and returned unto his own place.

* In a dream which Laban had, wherein he was ordered not to urge Jacob, either by threats or persuasion.

XIX. Origin of the name of Israel. Reconciliation of Jacob and Esau. Death of Rachel and Isaac.

"When the ways of a man are pleasing unto the Lord, He causeth even his enemies to be at peace with him."—*Prov.* xvi. 7.

Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau, his brother, unto the land of Seïr, in the fields of Edom; and he commanded them to speak in these terms unto Esau, Thus saith thy servant Jacob, With Laban have I sojourned and tarried until now; and I have acquired oxen and asses, flocks and men: and now I send to acquaint my lord, that I may find grace in his sight. And the messengers returned unto Jacob, saying, We came unto thy brother Esau, and, behold, he cometh out to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. And Jacob feared greatly, and his soul was sorely afflicted: and he besought the Lord, saying, O Lord God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac! O thou Lord, who hast said unto me, Return unto thy country, unto the place of thy birth, and I will deal well with thee. I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and the truth which Thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my stick only did I pass over this Jordan, and now have I two camps: O save me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I dread him, lest he come and smite me, and the mother with the children. He passed the night in that place, and selected from his herds and flocks a rich present for Esau. And he divided them into droves, and commanded his servants to

say unto his brother, This is a present unto my lord Esau, and thy servant Jacob followeth behind us. The same orders gave he unto all the servants who went with the droves, for he reasoned thus, I will appease him by the present which I send before me; then will I appear, and perchance he will receive me favourably. He sent forward his presents, but stayed in the camp all night. During the night he arose, and made his wives, his children, and all that he had, to pass over the ford of Jabbok; and he remained alone behind; and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn of day; but he prevailed not against him; and he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, and put it out of joint. Then the man said, Let me go, for the dawn appeareth; and Jacob answered, I will not let thee go, until thou hast blessed me. And he asked his name, and, on being told, Jacob, he said, Thy name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israël, for thou hast wrestled with angels and with men, and hast prevailed.* And Jacob asked him to tell him his name, and he said, Wherefore wilt thou ask for my name? and he blessed him there. Jacob called the name of this place Peni-El (meaning Divine face); For, said he, Here have I seen a divine being face to face, and my life is yet preserved.

And Jacob raised his eyes, and beheld Esau approaching with his four hundred men; and he advanced before his wives and children, and he prostrated himself seven times, until he reached his brother; but Esau ran to-

* The word of Israel is derived from *Sarah*, to contend in rivalry, and *El*, God.

wards him, embraced him, threw himself upon his neck, and kissed him; and they wept. When Esau beheld the women and the children, he inquired, What are these unto thee? and Jacob replied, They are the children whom the Lord hath graciously given unto thy servant. Then the women and the children approached and bowed themselves. And Esau said, What wilt thou with all the camp which I have met? and his brother answered, That I might find grace in the sight of my lord. I have enough, my brother, said Esau, Keep what thou hast. But Jacob replied, If I have verily found grace in thy sight, accept this present from my hand; since I have seen thy face, as one sees an angel's face, and thou hast favourably received me. Receive then this present, which I have brought thee; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully by me, and I have enough of all. And he urged him so much that he accepted it. And Esau returned the same day to Seïr.

Jacob tarried at Succoth, and built himself a house, and booths for his cattle, and the name of the place is, therefore, called Succoth (meaning booths), and thence he journeyed to Shechem, in the land of Canaan, where he arrived safely, and he bought a part of a field, and pitched his tent, and built an altar there, and called it El-Elohé-Yisraël (the Omnipotent the God of Israel).

And God appeared unto Jacob, when he returned from Padan-aram, and blessed him; and said unto him, Thy name shall no more be Jacob, but Israël shall be thy name, and He called him Israël. And He added, I am the Almighty God; be fruitful and multiply, a nation, a multitude of nations shall issue from thee, and kings

shall come from thy loins. And the land which I gave unto Abraham and unto Isaac, to thee will I give, and to thy descendants after thee for ever. And Jacob set up a pillar of stone, in the place where God had spoken unto him, and he poured wine and oil on the top thereof. And as they journeyed from Beth-El, when near Ephrath, Rachel gave birth to another son; but she suffered much at his birth, and she died: and as her soul was departing, she named him Ben-oni (son of my affliction); but Jacob named him Benjamin (son of my old age). So Rachel died, and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem, and Jacob raised a monument over her grave, which is the monument of the grave of Rachel, even unto this day. Jacob departed thence, and pitched his tents in Migdal-Eder; thence he journeyed with his wives, his twelve sons, and his daughter Dinah, and all that he had acquired at Padan-aram, to Hebron, in the land of Canaan, to his father Isaac. And the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years, and being old and full of years, he died, and was gathered unto his fathers; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him in the cave of Machpelah.

XX. Joseph. His dreams. Danger of calumny and envy.

"He who watcheth his mouth and his tongue, preserveth his soul from affliction."—*Prov.* xxi. 23.

Jacob dwelt in the land of Canaan. This is the history of the sons of Jacob: Joseph was seventeen years old, and fed the sheep of his father with his brothers,

and as a lad, diverted himself with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; but Joseph carried evil reports of his brothers to his father. Now Jacob loved Joseph more than all his children, for he was a child of his old age, and he made him a garment of divers colours: and his brothers, seeing that their father loved him more than his other children, hated him, and could not speak friendly unto him. Once upon a time, Joseph had a dream, which he related to his brothers. He said unto them, Hear, I pray you, the dream which I have had; behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, when my sheaf arose, and stood upright, whilst your sheaves stood around and bowed themselves down before mine. His brothers then said to him, Thinkest thou then to reign over us, or wishest thou to rule us? and they hated him still more. And he had another dream, and he related it also to his brothers: It did seem as though the sun, the moon, and eleven stars bowed down unto me. And his father rebuked him, saying, What meaneth this dream which thou hast had? Shall I, thy mother, and thy brothers, come to bow down unto thee to the ground? And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the dream in his mind.

Now his brothers had gone to feed the flocks of their father, at Shechem, and Israel said unto Joseph, Go see, whether thy brothers be well, and if it be all right with the flocks; and bring me word again: and Joseph departed from the valley of Hebron to Shechem. And having lost his way in the fields, he met a man who said, What seekest thou? and he answered, I seek my brothers; tell me, I pray thee, where they are feeding the

flocks? and the man said, They are gone hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brothers, and found them in Dothan. And when his brothers perceived him, yet afar off, they formed the criminal resolve of putting him to death. And they said to one another, Here cometh the dreamer; come now, let us slay him, and throw him into a pit, and we will say, A wild beast has devoured him; thus will we see what will become of his dreams. And Reuben, hearing it, saved him from their hand by saying unto them, Do not shed blood: cast him sooner into this pit in the wilderness, but lay not hand upon him. (He spoke thus in order to deliver him from their hands, and to restore him unto his father.) And when Joseph was come unto his brothers, they stripped from him his coat of many colours, and cast him into the pit, in which there was no water. They then sat down to eat; and, in the mean time, a caravan of Ishmaelite merchants passed by on their way to Egypt, and their camels were laden with spices, balsam, and lotus: and Judah said unto his brothers, What profit shall we have if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come let us sell him to these Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh; and his brothers consented, and they drew Joseph from the pit into which they had cast him, and sold him to those merchants for twenty pieces of silver. When Reuben returned unto the pit, and saw that Joseph was not there, he rent his garments, and returning to his brothers, he said, The lad is not there, and I, whither shall I go? And the brothers took a young kid, killed it, and dipped the coat of Joseph

in the blood, and sent it to their father, saying, This we have found, acknowledge now whether it be thy son's coat or not? He recognised it, and said, It is my son's coat; a wild beast hath devoured him; and he put on sackcloth, and mourned for his son many days. And all his children rose up to comfort him, but he refused all consolation, and said, I shall go down unto the grave mourning for my son. It was thus that his father wept for him.

XXI. Joseph, a Slave in Egypt.

A. M. 2216.

"Many evils afflict the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him from all."—*Psalm* xxxiv. 20.

Joseph was carried into Egypt, and sold by the Ishmaelites unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of his guard. And the Lord was with Joseph and prospered every thing that he did. Joseph also found grace in the eyes of his master, who made him the overseer of his house, and placed all that he had under his management. And the Lord blessed the house of the Egyptian for the sake of Joseph, so that the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. But the wife of Potiphar conceived hatred for Joseph, and she made a false charge against him to his master, and accused him of having acted in an improper manner toward her; and when his master had listened to her words, his wrath was kindled, and he took Joseph and cast him into prison, into the dungeon where the king's prisoners were confined. But the Lord was with Joseph, and He extended his mercy over him, and caused him to obtain

favour with the keeper of the prison, who gave him the guardianship of all the other prisoners who were confined in that prison, and over all the work that they did there; he looked not over any thing that he had placed in Joseph's hands, for the Lord was with him, and caused all that he did to prosper.

About the same time that Joseph was cast into prison, the chief butler and the chief baker offended their master the king of Egypt; and Pharaoh was incensed against his servants, and he placed them in prison, in the place where Joseph was confined; and the chief of the guards appointed Joseph to wait on them. After they had been in prison one year, they dreamed each a dream the same night. When Joseph came unto them in the morning, he noticed that they were sad; and he inquired, Why are your faces sad to-day? They answered, We have had a dream, and no one is here who can interpret it. Joseph said unto them, Are not the interpretations of dreams belonging to God alone? Tell me then your dream. Then the chief-butler told his dream, and said, In my dream a vine was before me; on the vine were three branches, and it seemed as though it budded; then the blossoms shot forth, and at length the clusters of grapes ripened: and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, and pressed them out into the cup, and I placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. Joseph then said unto him, This is the interpretation; the three branches denote three days: in three days Pharaoh will restore thee to thy office, and thou shalt again put the cup into Pharaoh's hand, according to thy former office, when thou wast his chief butler. Now think of

me when thou shalt be restored; and show kindness unto me, and mention me, I pray thee, unto Pharaoh, and get me out of this prison. For verily I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews, and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into this dungeon. When the chief baker heard this favourable interpretation, he said unto Joseph, Also, in my dream I had three baskets on my head, and in the uppermost basket were all kinds of baked things for Pharaoh, and behold the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head. Joseph replied, and said, This is the interpretation; the three baskets are three days: and within three days Pharaoh will lift up thy head from off thee, and will hang thee on a tree, and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee. Now, on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birth-day, he made a feast unto all his officers, and he reinstated the chief butler in his office; but the chief baker he ordered to be hanged, as Joseph had interpreted to them. But the chief butler did not remember Joseph, and soon forgot him.

XXII. Joseph is Delivered from Prison, and Elevated to Great Honours.

"The reward of humility, the fear of the Eternal, is riches, honour, and life."—*Proverbs* xxii. 4.

Two years afterwards Pharaoh also had a dream: he dreamed that he stood on the margin of the river; and, behold! seven cows, well-favoured, fine, and fat, came out of the river, and fed in the meadow. And there

arose seven other cows after them, ill-favoured, lank, and lean, and these devoured the former cows; and he awoke. He slept again, and dreamed a second time, and, behold! there came up on one stalk seven ears of corn, full and good. And after them sprang up seven other ears, thin, and blasted by the east wind, which swallowed up the former ears. Then he awoke; and his spirit being troubled, he sent in the morning, and assembled all the sages of Egypt, and told them his dreams; but no one could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Then the chief butler spoke unto Pharaoh and said, I must call to remembrance my faults this day: Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and cast us into prison, the chief baker and me. And we both had a dream, the same night; now there was with us a young man, a Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; so we told him our dreams and he did give us the interpretation; and as he interpreted to us, so it was; me they restored to my office, and the other they hanged. Whereupon Pharaoh sent for Joseph: they took him from prison, he shaved himself, changed his garments, and was conducted unto Pharaoh. And the latter said unto Joseph, I have had a dream, and no one can interpret it unto me; now I have heard that thou knowest how to interpret dreams. And Joseph replied unto Pharaoh, Far be it from me (to attribute to myself such wisdom), but the Lord will enable me to reply for Pharaoh's peace. Pharaoh then told him his dream; and he replied, The seven fat cows are seven years, and the seven full ears of corn are seven years: they are but one dream. The seven lean cows are seven years, as are also the seven thin

ears of corn: they denote seven years of famine. The Lord hath shown unto Pharaoh what he is about to do. Behold, there are coming seven years of great plenty and abundance in all the land of Egypt; but, after these, there shall be seven years of sore famine in the land, which shall blot out the remembrance of the years of plenty in the land of Egypt. Now, therefore, let Pharaoh select a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt, that he may, during the seven years of plenty, gather, and store up, all sorts of provisions, that the land be not consumed during the famine. Now this counsel pleased Pharaoh and all his servants, and he said, Can we find a man like this, one in whom there is the spirit of God? And then, turning to Joseph, he said, Since God hath shown thee all this, there is none so intelligent and wise as thou: thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only in reference to the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh took his ring from his hand and placed it on that of Joseph; and arrayed him in garments of fine linen, and placed a golden chain around his neck; and he made him ride in the second state chariot, and they proclaimed before him, Bend the knee. Thus did he place him over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh named him Tsaphnath Pangneach (that is to say, *he that knoweth the most hidden things*), and gave him to wife Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On. And Joseph was at that time thirty years old. He journeyed over the whole land, and gathered up every where an immense quantity of corn, numerous as the sand of the sea, and he stored it up in the towns. Asenath

bore unto Joseph two sons, he named the elder Menashé (*Menasseh*), and the younger Ephraim.

And when the seven years of plenty were ended, the seven years of famine commenced, as Joseph had foretold. There was famine in all the lands, but there was bread in the land of Egypt. And when the people cried loudly unto Pharaoh for bread, he said unto them, Go unto Joseph, and what he saith unto you, do. Joseph opened the storehouses, and sold corn unto the Egyptians; but the famine increased in the land: and from all the countries around, people came into Egypt unto Joseph to buy corn; for the famine was exceedingly great in all the country.

XXIII. Arrival of Joseph's Brothers. Their remorse.

"Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit."—*Psalm* xxxii. 2.

Jacob having learnt that corn could be purchased in Egypt, said unto his sons, Go ye into Egypt; buy for us a little food, that we may not die. And Joseph's ten brothers went down into Egypt to buy corn. But Jacob sent not with them Benjamin, Joseph's brother, for he said, peradventure mischief might befall him. The sons of Israel arrived in Egypt; and they went unto Joseph, and bowed themselves down before him. And as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognised them; but he did not make himself known unto them, but spoke roughly unto them. Whence come ye? said he to them; they replied, From the land of Canaan, to buy food. Joseph continued and

said, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land are ye come. They answered, No, my lord, thy servants are come to buy food. We are twelve brothers, all sons of one man in the land of Canaan: the youngest is now with our father, and another has disappeared. But Joseph said unto them, The thing is as I have said, ye are spies; by this shall ye be proved; (*I swear*) by the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not go hence, unless your youngest brother come hither. Send one from among you, that he bring your brother; but for you, ye shall remain shut up, that your words may be proved, whether you speak true; and if not, by the life of Pharaoh, ye are spies. And he put them all together into prison for three days. On the third day Joseph said unto them, Do this and live; for I fear God. If ye are true men, let one of your brothers remain in prison, and you, go and carry away the corn for the want of your families. But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. Then they said one to another, Verily we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore hath this calamity befallen us. And Reuben answered them, and said, Said I not then unto you, Do not sin against the child? But ye would not listen, and now his blood is also required. But they knew not that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. Joseph turned away, and wept; then returning to them, he spoke with them, and took Simeon from them, and had him bound in their presence. Joseph ordered their sacks to be filled with corn, and to return every man's money into his

sack, and to give them provisions for the journey; and it was done so. They loaded their asses with the sacks, and departed. And when they were come unto Jacob, they related to him all that had passed: when they emptied their sacks, and found each his money therein, they were afraid; and when they announced to their father that they must take their youngest brother into Egypt, unto the ruler of the country, Jacob said unto them, Will ye deprive me of all my children? Joseph has disappeared; Simeon is gone; and now will ye also take Benjamin? all these things befall me. My son shall not go with you, for his brother is dead, and he alone remaineth unto me; should any mischief befall him by the way, ye would bring my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

XXIV. Joseph's Brothers return into Egypt with Benjamin.

"The Lord had sent before them a man, even Joseph, who was sold as a slave."—*Psalm* cv. 17.

Now the famine was still grievous in the land; and when they had consumed all the provision they had brought from Egypt, their father said unto them, Return and buy us a little food. But Judah replied, saying, The man has forewarned us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, unless your brother be with you: if then thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go; if not, we will not go down. And Israel said, Wherefore did ye do me this evil, to tell this man that ye had yet another brother? They answered, The man interrogated us strictly con-

cerning ourselves and our kindred, and we told him every thing as it was: could we possibly know that he would say, Bring down your brother? And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the young man with us, and we will arise and go, that we may live, and not die—we, and thou, and our little ones. I will be surety for him; require him of my hands; and if I bring him not back unto thee, I will acknowledge myself guilty before thee all the days of my life. Then Israel their father said unto them, Since it must be, do this; take of the best fruits of the land as a present unto this man; a little balsam, a little honey, spices, lotus, dates, and almonds. Take also twofold money with you, for you must restore to him that which was replaced in your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. Take your brother, and return unto the man; and may the Almighty God give you grace before the man, that he may release your other brother, and also Benjamin. As for me, if I am to be deprived of my children, so be it, let me be deprived.

They took the present and the twofold money, and then rose up and returned to Egypt, and presented themselves before Joseph. On seeing them, he ordered his steward to bring them into his house, and to prepare a meal; For, said he, these men shall eat with me this day at noon. When they perceived that they were conducted into Joseph's house, they feared that it was on account of the money they had found in their sacks; they thought that they were to be seized, their asses taken from them, and themselves made slaves. They approached, therefore, the superintendent of Joseph's house, and said, Pardon, my lord, we came down before

to buy corn; and on our return, when we came to an inn, each one of us found his money in his sack; and we have brought it back, as also other money to buy food. We know not who hath put our money into our sacks. Whereupon he said to them, Fear not; your God and the God of your father hath given you a treasure in your sacks; I received your money. He then went and brought Simeon unto them. Water was brought them to wash their feet, and provender was given to their asses. And they made ready the present whilst waiting for Joseph's return at midday; for they had heard that they were to eat there at noon. Now when Joseph was returned unto his house, they presented him the gifts which they had brought, and bowed themselves down before him. And he inquired after their welfare, and said unto them, Is your aged father, of whom ye have spoken, still alive? Is he well? They replied, Thy servant, our father, is well, he still liveth; and they bent their heads, and prostrated themselves before him. Then Joseph raising his eyes, saw Benjamin, his brother, the son of his mother, and said, Is this your young brother of whom ye have spoken to me? and he added, God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph withdrew speedily from the room, for his heart was moved at the sight of his brother; he went into his chamber, and wept; then washing his face, he returned, and restraining himself, he said, Set on the dinner. And they set on for him by himself, for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; for it was an abomination for the Egyptians to eat bread with the Hebrews. They seated themselves

before Joseph, the first-born according to his birthright, the youngest according to his youth, and they showed their astonishment one unto another. And they ate, and drank, and were merry before him. And Joseph commanded his steward, saying, Fill the sacks of these men with food as much as they can carry, and put each man's money at the mouth of his sack, and place my silver cup in the sack of the youngest. And he did as Joseph had commanded him. On the morrow, at break of day, he sent the men away with their asses. They had not proceeded far, when the steward, by Joseph's orders, pursued them, and having overtaken them, said, Why have ye returned evil for good? is it not the cup in which my master drinketh (*which ye have stolen*), and whereby he divineth? Ye have done evil in so doing. But they answered, Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do this thing: behold, the money we found in our sacks we brought back from the land of Cannan, and would we rob the house of thy master of silver or gold? Let the one with whom the cup be found die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen. But he answered, Nay, he in whose possession it shall be found, shall be my slave; but the rest shall be blameless. And each man lifted his sack on the ground; and he searched, beginning at the eldest, and finishing at the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, reloaded their asses, and returned to the city; and they came unto Joseph's house, and fell on their face before him. Then Joseph said unto them, What action is this which ye have done? Know ye not that

such a man as I can certainly divine the truth? And Judah said to him, What shall we say unto my lord, and how can we justify ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants. Behold, both we, and he in whose hand the cup was found, are thy slaves. But Joseph replied, God forbid that I should do so; the man in whose hand the cup was found shall be my slave; as for you, return in peace unto your father.

Then Judah drew nigh unto him, and said, Permit me, I beseech thee, my lord, that thy servant say a few words, and let not thine anger be inflamed against thy servant, for thou art equal to Pharaoh. My lord asked of his servants, Have ye a father or a brother? and we replied to our lord, We have an aged father, and a brother, who is the youngest of his children, born in his old age, and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may see him. We replied to my lord, The young man cannot quit his father; and if he quit him his father would die. But thou saidst unto thy servants, If your youngest brother come not with you, you shall not see my face again. When we returned unto thy servant, my father, we related to him the words of my lord. And when our father said unto us, Return (unto Egypt), and buy us some food: we replied, We cannot go down there, unless our youngest brother go with us. Thy servant, my father, then said unto us, Ye know that my wife bore unto me two sons; and the one went out from me, and I said, He hath no doubt been torn to pieces (by a wild beast); for I have not seen him since. Now if ye will take also this

son from me, and any misfortune should befal him, you would bring my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Should I then return unto thy servant, my father, and the young man be not with us, in whose soul his soul is bound, he will die; and thy servants will have brought the gray hairs of their father in sorrow to the grave. Now thy servant became surety for the young man to his father, saying, If I bring him not back unto thee, I will be a sinner against my father all the days (of my life). I beseech thee, therefore, let thy servant remain a slave unto my lord in the place of the youth, and that he may return with his brothers. For how could I return unto my father, and the young man be not with me? I could not see the affliction which would overwhelm my father.

XXV. Joseph makes himself known unto his Brothers.

"Say not, I will do unto him as he hath done unto me; I will render unto this man according to his work."—*Proverbs* xxiv. 29.

Then Joseph, unable any longer to restrain himself before all those who surrounded him, cried out, Let every one depart from me; and no one remained with him, when Joseph made himself known unto his brothers. He raised his voice whilst weeping, and said unto them, I am Joseph; is my father still alive? but his brothers could not answer him, for they were terrified at his presence. And Joseph continued, Come near unto me, I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt; but be not grieved, and regret not having sold

me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life. For during these two years hath the famine been in the land, and there will yet be five more years, in which there will be neither sowing nor harvest. Therefore is it that God sent me before you to procure you subsistence in this country, and to preserve your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God, and He hath made me a father unto Pharaoh, a ruler in his house, and a governor over all the land of Egpyt. Hasten then, return unto my father, and tell him all that you have seen; let him come down here with his children, his grandchildren, and all that he hath. He shall inhabit the land of Goshen, that he be near unto me, and that I may maintain you all during the years of famine; therefore hasten, and bring my father unto me. He then fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. He then kissed all his brothers, and wept upon them; and after this his brothers spoke unto him. When Pharaoh learnt that Joseph's brothers had arrived, it pleased him and his servants, and he told Joseph to bring his father and all his family down, and to settle them in the best part of the land of Egypt. Therefore Joseph gave them chariots and provisions for their journey. He also gave them each changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of garments. He also sent for his father ten asses, laden with the best of all Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with corn, bread, and other provisions for his father for the journey. They departed from Egypt, and arrived in Canaan at their father's, to

whom they announced that Joseph still lived, and that he was the governor over all the land of Egypt; but his heart was weak and he did not believe them. They then repeated to him all that Joseph had said unto them; and when he saw the chariots which Joseph had sent to convey him to Egypt, the spirit of Jacob, their father, revived. And Israel said, It is enough; my son Joseph still liveth; I will go and see him before I die.

XXVI. Jacob goes into Egypt with his Family.

"The father of a righteous man shall greatly rejoice; he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him."—*Prov.* xxiii. 24.

Israel set out, with all that he had, for Beër-sheba, where he offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke unto Israel in a nocturnal vision and said unto him, I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down unto Egypt, for I will cause thee to become there a great nation. I will descend with thee into Egypt; and I will bring thee out therefrom, and Joseph shall put his hand upon thy eyes (that is, *shall close thy eyes*). Israel then quitted Beër-sheba, with his sons, their wives, their children, and all that they had, and journeyed into Egypt. The family of Jacob when he arrived in Egypt, consisted of seventy persons, including therein the two sons of Joseph.

Joseph prepared his chariot, and went to meet his father at Goshen: and when he drew nigh unto him, he fell on his neck, and wept long. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now I will gladly die, since I have seen thy face, and thou still livest. Jacob and his family then

remained in the land of Goshen. Shortly after Joseph went unto Pharaoh, and told him, My father and my brothers, and their flocks and their herds, and all that they have, are come from the land of Canaan, and they are now in the land of Goshen. He also brought five of his brothers, and presented them unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, The land of Egypt is before thee; establish thy father and thy brothers in the best part of the country; let them remain in the land of Goshen, and if thou knowest any active men among them, make them chiefs (of the shepherds) over my flocks. Joseph also presented his father unto Pharaoh, and Jacob saluted Pharaoh, who said unto him, What is the number of the years of thy life? And Jacob replied, The days of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the years of my life, nor have they reached the years of my fathers in their pilgrimage. Jacob again saluted Pharaoh and retired. And Joseph placed his father and his brothers in the best of the land, in the territory of Ramesses, as Pharaoh had ordered him. The children of Israel were thus established in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; they acquired property there, and multiplied extremely. And Joseph supported his father, and all his family, according to the number of the children. Joseph also furnished corn to all the inhabitants of Egypt, during the years of famine; and he transferred unto Pharaoh all the money, cattle, and lands, which the people gave him in exchange for the corn.

XXVII. The last Commands and Death of Jacob.

"Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—*Psalm* xc. 12.

Jacob lived seventeen years in the land of Egypt. The years of his life were one hundred and forty-seven years. When the time of the death of Israel approached, he called his son Joseph and said unto him, If I have found grace in thy eyes act towards me with benevolence and truth, and bury me not in Egypt. But when I sleep with my fathers, carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their sepulchre. Joseph replied, I will do as thou hast said. Jacob continued, Swear unto me; and Joseph swore unto him; and Israel bowed himself on the head of the bed. A short time after, Joseph, being informed that his father was ill, took with him his two sons, Menasseh and Ephraim. And it was told unto Jacob, saying, Thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. And Israel exerted himself, and sat up in the bed; and he said unto Joseph, The Almighty God appeared unto me in Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, I will make thee fruitful and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and I will give this land unto thy seed after thee for a perpetual inheritance. And now thy two sons, who were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, are mine: Ephraim and Menasseh shall be unto me as Reuben and Simeon. But the children which thou mayest beget after them, shall

be thine, they shall be called after the name of their brothers in their inheritance. As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died on the road in the land of Canaan, a short distance from Ephrat, and I buried her there on the way to Ephrat, now called Beth-lechem. And as Israel perceived Joseph's sons, he said unto him, Who are these? And Joseph answered his father, They are my sons whom God hath given me here. And Jacob said, Bring them near unto me, that I may bless them. But the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see clearly. Joseph then brought them unto him, and Israel embraced them, and kissed them; and he said unto Joseph, I had not expected to see thy face again, and lo! God hath shown me also thy seed. And Joseph withdrew them from between the knees of his father, and bowed himself with his face to the earth. He then led them back unto his father, so that Menasseh was on the right of Israel and Ephraim on his left. But Israel intentionally placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left on the head of Menasseh, though he was the elder. And he blessed Joseph and his sons, and said, The God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, and who hath protected me all my life long even until this day; the angel who hath delivered me from all evil, bless the lads, and let my name, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, be named on them, and let them become a great multitude in the midst of the earth. And when Joseph saw that his father had placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, he was displeased; and he took hold of the hand of his father to remove it from the head

of Ephraim on to that of Menasseh, saying, Not so, my father, for this is the elder; put thy right hand upon his head. But his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it; this one also shall become a people, and be great; but his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his posterity shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them on that day, and said, By thee shall Israel bestow the blessing, saying, *May God make thee as Ephraim and Menasseh.** Then Israel said unto Joseph, I am going to die; but God will be with you, and will bring you back into the land of your fathers. And he called unto his sons, blessed them all one after the other, made known unto them his last will, and said, I am about to be gathered unto my fathers; bury me with my fathers, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, in the land of Canaan. There they buried Abraham and Sarah; there were buried Isaac and Rebecca; and there I buried Leah. And when Jacob had ended his orders unto his children, he drew up his feet into the bed, and expired, and was gathered unto his people.

XXVIII. Funeral of Jacob. Generosity and Noble Conduct of Joseph towards his Brothers. Death of Joseph.

A. M. 2309.

"Lo, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—*Psalm* cxxxiii. 1.

Then Joseph fell upon his father's face, wept upon him and kissed him. Joseph then ordered such of his

* The Israelites employ this formula in blessing their children even to this day.

servants as were physicians to embalm his father, and they embalmed Israel. And the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days. When the days of his mourning were passed, Joseph spoke unto the officers of the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, unto Pharaoh in this wise, My father made me swear to bury him in his sepulchre in the land of Canaan; now, therefore, let me go up and bury my father, and I will return. And Pharaoh said unto him, Go bury thy father, as he hath caused thee to swear. And Joseph departed to bury his father, and all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, went up with him, as did also all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and the people of the house of his father. Only their children and their flocks were left in the land of Goshen. Chariots and horsemen also went up, and it was a very great company. The sons of Jacob conveyed their father to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of Machpelah. After Joseph had interred his father, he returned to Egypt with his brothers, and all those that had accompanied him. The brothers of Joseph, reflecting that their father was dead, said one to another, Perhaps Joseph will now hate us, and he will return unto us all the evil we have done unto him. They sent, therefore, unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command us before his death, saying, Thus shall ye say unto Joseph, I beseech thee, pardon the trespass of thy brothers, and their sin in having done evil unto thee! And now, pardon, I beseech thee, the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father! And Joseph wept when they spoke

thus to him. Then his brothers came themselves and fell down before him, and said, We are thy servants. But Joseph replied, Fear not; am I in the place of God? Though ye had the intention of doing me harm, God intended it for good, to accomplish, as it is this day, the saving of many people alive. Fear not, then. I will nourish you and your children. He comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them likewise. And Joseph lived to see the great-grandchildren of Ephraim; and the grandchildren of Manasseh also were brought up upon Joseph's knees.

And Joseph said unto his brothers, I am going to die; but God will remember you, and bring you out of this land into the land which he promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph made the children of Israel swear, saying, God will surely visit you, and you shall then carry my bones out with you. Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and they embalmed him, and he was put into a coffin in Egypt.

THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES, OR EXODUS. ספר שמות

I. Slavery of the Israelites.

"He turned their heart to hate his people, and to deal deceitfully with his servants."—*Psalm* cv. 25.

After the death of Joseph and his brothers, their descendants multiplied exceedingly, and became a numerous people. And there arose a new king in Egypt, who had not known Joseph; and he said unto his people, The children of Israel are becoming too numerous and too powerful for us. Let us act cunningly with them, lest they multiply yet more, and if a war arise, join with our enemies, and fight against us, or quit the country. So they set task-masters over them, to afflict them with heavy work; and they compelled them to build strong towns (*or magazines, arsenals*) for Pharaoh, namely, Pithom and Raamses. The Egyptians made the Israelites work with rigour. They rendered their life bitter by the most laborious toil; they employed them to make mortar, and bricks, and all sorts of labour in the field. Pharaoh also ordered the midwives of Israel to kill all the new-born male infants, and to let live all the females. But as the midwives feared God, they spared the children; Pharaoh thereupon commanded all his people, saying, Every male child that is born shall ye cast into the river, and every female shall ye let live.

II. Birth of Moses and his miraculous preservation.

A. M. 2368.

"Neither wisdom, understanding, nor counsel, availeth aught against the Lord."—*Proverbs* xvii. 30.

Amram, a man of the house of Levi, had taken to wife Jochebed, a daughter of Levi. She had borne unto him a son, named Aaron, and a daughter, named Miriam. She bore him at this time another son, and seeing that he was handsome, she concealed him for three months. But as she could not conceal him longer, she made a wicker-basket, and daubed it with slime and pitch, placed the child in it, and placed it in the flags, by the brink of the river. The sister of the child kept at some distance, to see what would happen to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to the river to bathe—and her servants walked on the borders of the river; and she beheld the basket between the flags, and sent her maid to bring it to her. She opened it, and saw the child; and behold it was a weeping boy; and she had pity on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrew children. Then the sister approached the daughter of Pharaoh, and said, Shall I go and call thee a Hebrew woman to nurse him? and she said, Go; and the maiden went, and called the mother of the child. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child, and nurse him for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed him. When the child grew up, she carried him

to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became unto her as a son. And she named him Moshé* (Moses), for she said, I drew him out of the water.

III. Zeal of Moses for Justice. He flees to the Land of Midian.

"Defend the poor, and the needy, snatch them from the hand of the wicked."—*Psalm* lxxxii. 4.

Moses being now grown, went out among his brethren, and looked at their heavy labour; when he saw an Egyptian strike a Hebrew, one of his brethren. Seeing that no person was nigh, he smote the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. The next day he went out again, and saw two Hebrew men fighting; and he said unto him who was in the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy neighbour? But he replied unto him, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? thinkest thou to kill me as thou didst kill the Egyptian? And Moses was afraid, and said, Surely the thing is become known. And when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to kill Moses; but Moses fled before Pharaoh, and went into the country of Midian. One day, when he was seated near a well, the daughters of Jethro, priest of Midian, came to fill the troughs to water the flock of their father. But the shepherds came and drove them away. Then Moses arose and helped them, and watered their flock. When they returned to their grandfather Reuël, he said unto them, How came ye back so soon to-day? and they replied,

* The word Moshe signifies to retire, to draw out.

An Egyptian man protected us against the shepherds, he also drew the water for us, and watered the flock. And he said to his daughters, Where is he? why did you thus leave the man? call him, that he may eat bread with us. Moses came, and consented to remain with Jethro, who gave him his daughter Zipporah for wife.

IV. First Appearance of God to Moses. The Mission of Moses.

"The Lord hath sent redemption unto His people; He hath established His covenant for ever; holy and fearful is his name."—*Psalm* cxi. 9.

Moses was tending the flock of Jethro, and led the sheep far into the desert, and arrived at the mount of the Lord, at Horeb. And an angel of the Lord appeared there unto him in a flame of fire, in the midst of a bush; and Moses remarked that the bush burned with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. Then Moses drew nigh, and said, I will go and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And the Lord called unto him from the midst of the bush, and said, Moses! Moses! and he said, Here am I. And the Lord said, Draw not nigh hither, pull off thy shoes from thy feet; for the place on which thou standest is holy ground. He said also, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and Moses hid his face for he feared to look towards God. The Lord then continued: I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt, and have heard their cry against their oppressors; for I know their sufferings. Therefore am I come down to deliver them

from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them into a good and spacious land, flowing with milk and honey. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, and thou shalt bring out my people, the children of Israel, from Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and bring out the children of Israel from Egypt? and he added, When I shall say unto the children of Israel, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they should ask what is His name?* what shall I say to them? God thereupon replied to Moses, I will be with thee and thou shalt have a sign, that they may believe that the God of their fathers hath appeared unto thee. Then say unto the children of Israel, *He who is and who will be eternally*, hath sent me unto you. Go, gather together the elders of Israel, and say unto them, The Eternal, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob hath appeared unto me, saying, I have observed you and what is done unto you in Egypt, and I have resolved to deliver you from the affliction of Egypt, and bring you unto the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. Yet I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go; but I will stretch forth my hand, and will smite Egypt with all the wonders which I will do in the midst thereof; and after that he will let you go. Yet Moses said unto the Lord, Pardon, O Lord! I am not, and never was a man

* The horrible slavery under which the children of Israel groaned for many ages, and the example of the superstitious idolatry of the Egyptians, had perhaps effaced from their memory the belief of their fathers in one sole God; they had lost the remembrance of the simple and pious lives of the patriarchs.

of ready words, but am slow of speech, and heavy of tongue; I pray thee, O Lord! send some other whom thou wilt send. But the Eternal said unto Moses, Who hath made man's mouth, or who maketh man deaf or dumb? who causeth him to be well endowed? or to be blind? is it not I, the Eternal? Therefore, go now, thy brother Aaron, the Levite, will be with thee, and will speak for thee. He cometh even now to meet thee, and will cordially rejoice at seeing thee again. Thou shalt put the words in his mouth; and I will be with thee and with him, and will teach thee what ye shall say. He shall speak for thee unto the people, and shall thus serve thee for a mouth, and thou shalt be unto him a God (*that is thou shalt inform him of what he has to say*), and thou shalt take this staff in thy hands, with which thou shalt do the signs. Then Moses returned unto his father-in-law, and said, Let me go, I pray thee, unto Egypt, and see if my brothers yet live: and Jethro replied, Go in peace.

V. Moses and Aaron appear before the Children of Israel; and afterwards before Pharaoh.

"The Lord hath created every thing according to its end; even the wicked for the day of evil."—*Proverbs* xvi. 4.

The Lord also said unto Aaron, Go into the desert to meet thy brother; and he went, and met him near the mount of the Lord, and embraced him. Moses repeated unto Aaron all the words which the Eternal had sent him to deliver, and told him of all the miracles which He had

commanded him to do. Moses and Aaron then went and assembled the elders of the children of Israel; and Aaron recounted all the words which the Eternal had said unto Moses, and did also the miracles before the people. And the people believed, and understood that the Lord had remembered the children of Israel and had seen their affliction; and they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves. After this Moses and Aaron went and presented themselves to Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the Eternal, the God of Israel, Let my people go that they may celebrate a feast unto me in the wilderness. But Pharaoh said, Who is the Eternal whose voice I am to obey, to let the people go? I know not the Eternal, and also the Israelites I will not let go. They replied, The God of the Hebrews hath met us: permit us then to make a journey of three days into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice unto the Eternal, lest he smite us with the pestilence, or the sword. But Pharaoh said, Moses and Aaron! wherefore disturb ye the people from their labours? go unto your own affairs! And the same day Pharaoh ordered the task-masters and overseers of the people saying, Give no more straw unto the people to make bricks with. Let them go, and gather themselves the straw; nevertheless, let them continue to make the same quantity of bricks as heretofore, for they are idle; wherefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice unto the Lord. Let more work be laid upon these people, that they may be engaged therein, and not have leisure to occupy themselves in false things. So the people spread all over the land to gather stubble instead of straw. And the officers of the children of Israel were

beaten because the latter furnished not the usual quantity of bricks. Thus they found themselves in a cruel position, being obliged to tell the labourers, Ye must not diminish aught from the number of bricks ordered as your daily task. And they met Moses and Aaron coming out from before Pharaoh, and they said unto them, May the Eternal examine and judge you; for you have inspired against us hatred in Pharaoh, and his servants, as much as if ye had put a sword in their hands to kill us. Then Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Lord wherefore hast thou done evil to this people? Why didst thou send me? Ever since I have been unto Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he hath ill-treated these people yet more; and yet hast Thou not delivered thy people. But the Lord comforted him with the assurance that Pharaoh should soon be compelled to dismiss the Israelites from his land, though greatly against his will.

VI. Moses and Aaron again sent unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh. The ten plagues of Egypt.

"He cast upon them (the Egyptians) the fierceness of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, by sending among them evil angels."—*Psalm* lxxviii. 49.

The Lord spoke unto Moses and Aaron, saying, I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as the Almighty God; but by my name of The Eternal* was I not known

* That is, the Inscrutable, Infinite Being, who fills all time and space, whose wisdom and justice are infallible, whose goodness and mercy are without limit.

unto them. And I established my covenant with them, that I would give unto them the land in which they sojourned, even the land of Canaan. Now, I have heard the groans of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians retain in slavery, and I have remembered my covenant. Thus say unto the children of Israel, I, the Eternal One, will bring you out of the oppression of Egypt; I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will save you with an outstretched arm, and with great wonders. I will also take you for my people, and I will be your God; and ye shall know that I am the Lord, your God, who bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you unto the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it unto you for an inheritance; I am the Eternal. Moses spoke thus unto the children of Israel; but they listened not unto him, for they had not time to breathe, on account of their cruel bondage. Then the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, Go in unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and say unto him, Thus saith the Eternal, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness; but if thou refusest to let them go, I will send upon thee and upon thy people great plagues, that thou mayst know that there is nothing to be compared unto me upon all the earth. And Moses and Aaron did as God had commanded them. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he would not let the children of Israel go. Now Moses was eighty, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke unto Pharaoh. Then the Eternal smote Pharaoh and all the people of Egypt with great plagues, accompanied with miracles, which He

made Moses and Aaron perform. First, all the waters of Egypt were changed into blood, so that the Egyptians could no more drink those waters. Next, frogs rose up and covered all the land of Egypt. Then the dust of the earth became lice all over the land of Egypt, and the lice were upon man and cattle. The Lord next sent against Pharaoh, and against his people, all sorts of wild animals, which entered into the houses of Pharaoh and his people. Then a terrible pestilence caused all the cattle of the Egyptians to perish; while not one of the herds of Israel suffered therefrom. Biles and ulcers covered man and beast all over the land; a tremendous hail, accompanied with thunder and lightning, such as had never been seen in the land of Egypt, smote all that were in the fields, both man and beast, and destroyed all the trees and plants. But in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel lived, there was no hail. An east wind then brought over all the land of Egypt such a swarm of locusts, that the like had never before been, nor will ever be again seen. The locusts descended on the land, and covered the face of the earth, so that the land was darkened with them, and they devoured all the plants of the earth, and all the fruits of the trees, which the hail had spared; and there remained no verdure either on the trees or plants in all the land of Egypt. The Lord next covered Egypt with thick darkness during three days; no one could see the other, nor could they move from their place during the three days; whilst the children of Israel had light in all their dwellings. This last was the ninth plague with which the Lord smote Pharaoh and his people, on account of the children of

Israel. For as soon as he was smitten with one plague, Pharaoh said unto Moses and Aaron, I will now let the people go; only entreat the Lord on my behalf. But no sooner had the plague ceased, than he hardened his heart, and refused to let them go away. Thus did he do on each occasion.

VII. Institution of the Feast of Pesach, or Passover. Departure of the Israelites from Egypt. A. M. 2448.

"That the generation to come, the children yet unborn, may know and tell them unto their children; that they may place their trust in God, and forget not the works of God, but keep his commandments."—*Psalm* lxxviii. 6, 7.

Then the Lord said unto Moses, I will bring yet one more plague upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians, after which, he shall let you go; and then he shall drive you all out from here. At midnight I will appear in Egypt, and all the first-born in Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh, who is to sit on his throne, unto the first-born of the slave who sitteth behind the mill, and every first-born of the cattle. But against the children of Israel not even a dog shall wag his tongue, neither against man nor cattle; that ye may know that the Eternal hath made a distinction between the Egyptians and the Israelites. The Lord spoke further unto Moses and Aaron, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of the months; it shall be unto you the first month of the year.* Speak unto all the congregation of

* The month of Nissan. The word *Pesach*, in Hebrew, means *passing over—setting free.*

Israel, Let each of you take for his family a lamb, and slay it on the eve of the fourteenth day of this month, and with the blood thereof sprinkle the two posts, and the lintel of the door of the houses in which they eat it. And they shall eat, that same evening, the flesh roasted by the fire, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The blood shall be unto you for a sign in the houses in which you be, and I will *pass over* them, and the destroyer shall not be upon you, when I smite in the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; ye shall celebrate it as a festival in honour of the Lord. On the first month, on the fourteenth day, in the evening, shall ye eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the same month, in the evening. And on the first day shall ye have removed all leaven from your habitations; for whosoever shall eat leavened bread from the first to the seventh day, shall be cut off from among Israel. And ye shall observe all that concerns the unleavened bread; for on that day will I bring out your armies from the land of Egypt. Therefore shall ye keep this day, through all your generations, as an everlasting statute. Ye shall also sanctify unto me all the first-born among Israel, both of men and beasts. And when your children shall say unto you, one day, What meaneth this ceremony? ye shall say unto them, This is the sacrifice of the Pesach (pass over), in honour of the Eternal, because He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when He smote their first-born, and He spared our houses. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thy hand, and for a memorial between thy eyes, so that the precept of the Lord may be in thy mouth; for with a strong hand hath

the Lord brought thee out of the land of Egypt. Moses and Aaron spoke unto the children of Israel all that the Lord had commanded them, and the children of Israel did so. And when midnight came, the Lord smote all the first-born of the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh, who might one day sit on his throne, to the first-born of the captive in the prison, and all the first-born of the cattle. And there was great lamentation in all the land of Egypt; for there was not a house in which there was not some one dead. Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron at night, and said to them, Arise, go out from among my people, you and all the children of Israel, with your flocks and your herds; go and serve the Eternal, as ye have said, and bless me also. And the Egyptians urged on the people that they might send them away speedily; for they said, We all must die. The people took their dough before it was leavened; their troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. It was at the end of the four hundred and thirtieth year (of their sojourn in Egypt), the fifteenth day of the first month, that the children of Israel went out from Egypt. They journeyed from Raamses to Succoth, to the number of six hundred thousand men, besides children. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought with them from Egypt; for they had been driven from Egypt, and had no time to tarry; nor had they prepared any provision for the journey. Moses brought away with him also the bones of Joseph, as he had made the children of Israel swear that they would do, when God should deliver them from Egypt.

VIII. Pharaoh pursues the Israelites. Passage of the Red Sea.

"The king is not saved by a numerous army, the man of might escapeth not by his great strength. The speed of a horse is vain for victory, a powerful army cannot save. Behold, the eye of the Lord watcheth over them that fear Him, and upon those that hope in His mercy."—*Psalm* xxxiii. 16, 17, 18.

The children of Israel departed from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, on the border of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them, by day, in a pillar of cloud, to lead them on the way, and by night, in a pillar of fire, to light them on their journey, so that they might proceed by day and by night. Now Pharaoh regretted having let the children of Israel go; and said, What have we done to let the children of Israel go away from our service? And he prepared his chariot, and took his people with him. He took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over them all; and the Egyptians, with chariots, horsemen, and men on foot, pursued the Israelites, and overtook them while they were encamped near the sea. And the Israelites lifted up their eyes, and perceived the Egyptians advancing behind them, and they were sorely afraid, and cried unto the Lord. They said unto Moses, Are there no sepulchres in Egypt, that thou shouldst bring us to die in the wilderness? Why didst thou bring us out from Egypt? Said we not unto thee in Egypt, Leave us, that we may serve the Egyptians; for it is better for us to serve

them than to perish in the wilderness? But Moses said unto the people, Fear not; remain quiet and witness the aid which the Lord will extend towards you this day; for, as you see the Egyptians this day, ye shall never more again behold them. The Lord will fight for you; but you keep your peace.

The Lord then said unto Moses, Why criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward. And thou, raise thy staff, extend thy hand over the sea, and divide it, and the children of Israel shall pass through the sea on dry ground. And behold, I will strengthen (*encourage*) the heart of the Egyptians, that they shall pursue after them, and I will be glorified upon Pharaoh, upon all his army, his chariots, and his riders. That the Egyptians may know that I am the Eternal when I shall be honoured on Pharaoh, his chariots, and his riders. And the angel of the Lord, who went before the camp of the Israelites, withdrew and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud, which went before them, withdrew and went behind them, and came between the camp of the Israelites and the Egyptians; and it was a cloud and darkness unto these; but it gave light by night to the former; so that the one camp came not near the other during all the night. Moses then stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to be driven back by a strong east wind all the night, and He changed the sea into dry ground, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground, and the waters were as a wall unto them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians thereupon pursued them,

and went in after them, with all the horses of Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen, into the midst of the sea. And early in the morning the Lord viewed the camp of the Egyptians through the pillar of cloud and of fire, and spread dismay therein. He took off their chariot wheels, that they drove them heavily. The Egyptians then exclaimed, Let us flee before Israel; for the Eternal fighteth for them against Egypt. But the Lord said unto Moses, Extend thy hand over the sea, and the waters shall return upon the Egyptians, their chariots and their horsemen. Moses stretched forth his hand, and the sea returned, towards morning, to its ordinary strength, and the Egyptians fleeing, went towards it; and the Lord sunk them thus into the midst of the sea; and there remained not one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry ground in the midst of the sea, and the waters were unto them a wall on their right and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the shore of the sea. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord had manifested upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed in the Lord, and in Moses his servant. Then sang Moses, and the children of Israel, this song unto the Eternal, and thus did they say: I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song; and He is become my salvation; He is my God, and I will prepare a habitation for Him; the God of my fathers, and I will exalt Him. The Eternal is the Lord of war; the Eternal is His name. The cha-

riots and the host of Pharaoh hath He hurled into the sea; and his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.* The depths have covered them; they went down to the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord! is become glorious in power; Thy right hand, O Lord! hath dashed the enemy. And in the greatness of Thy excellency hast Thou overthrown those who rose up against Thee; Thou didst send forth thy wrath; it consumed them as stubble. And with the breath of Thy nostrils, the waters were heaped up together; the floods stood upright as a wall, the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will pursue—I will overtake—I will divide the spoil—my desire shall be satisfied upon them:—I will unsheath my sword—my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them; they sunk as lead in mighty waters. Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the mighty? Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, working miracles? Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. In Thy mercy Thou leadest forth the people whom Thou hast redeemed: with Thy strength Thou guidest them unto Thy holy habitation. Nations hear and tremble: sorrow seizeth the inhabitants of Palestine. Then were the dukes of Edom troubled; trembling shall take hold of the mighty men of Moab: all the inhabitants of Canaan shall become faint-hearted. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of Thy arm they shall be

* The word *Suph* signifies flags or bulrushes. The Hebrews call the Red Sea *the sea* of *flags* or *reeds*.

still as a stone: till Thy people pass over, O Lord! till this people pass over which Thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mount of Thy inheritance; the place, O Lord! which Thou hast made for Thy residence; the sanctuary, O Lord! which Thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her with timbrels, and dancing. And Miriam sang before them: Sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

IX. God nourishes the Israelites in the Wilderness, and causes Water to spring forth from a Rock.

"Behold He smote the rock and the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; but can He give bread also? can He provide flesh for His people? He commanded the clouds from above, and opened the doors of Heaven: and He rained down upon them manna to eat, and gave them of the corn of heaven. He rained flesh also upon them as dust; and feathered fowl as the sand of the sea."—*Psalm* lxxviii. 20, 23, 24, 27.

Moses caused the children of Israel to depart from the Red Sea, and they journeyed towards the wilderness of Shur; and after travelling three days through the desert without finding water, they arrived at Marah. And they could not drink the waters of Marah for they were bitter, and they named the place Marah (*bitterness*). The

people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? Moses then called on the Lord, and the Lord showed him a sort of wood which Moses threw in the water, and it became sweet. They proceeded thence to Elim, where they found twelve springs of water, and seventy date-trees; and they encamped there near the springs. Departing from Elim, all the congregation of the children of Israel arrived at the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from Egypt. And all the people murmured against Moses and Aaron in the desert, and the children of Israel said, Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots and ate bread to our fill; but you have brought us into this desert, to destroy all this congregation with hunger. But the Lord said unto Moses, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak to them thus, In the evening shall ye eat flesh and in the morning ye shall be satisfied with bread, that ye may know that I am the Eternal, your God.

And it came to pass in the evening, that a multitude of quails rose up and covered the camp: and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the same; and when the layer of dew was evaporated, behold there lay in the desert a small, round substance, like hoar-frost, upon the earth. The children of Israel knew not what it was, and Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord giveth you to eat. This is what the Lord hath commanded concerning it, Let each one gather what is required, an omer for every person; each one shall take according to the number of persons, he has in his tent.

And the children of Israel did so. Moses also said, Let no man leave any thing until the morrow. Nevertheless some did leave thereof until the morrow, and they found it full of worms and stinking, and Moses was angry with them. But on the sixth day, as they gathered each a double quantity, two omers for each man, the heads of the congregation came and told Moses; and he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, To-morrow is a day of rest, a holy day of rest, in honour of the Eternal; cook that which ye have to cook, and keep what remaineth for the morrow. They therefore kept some until the morrow as Moses had ordered them, and it stank not, neither were there any worms therein. And Moses said, Eat to-day, for it is a day of rest in honour of the Lord; to-day ye will find none in the field. Ye are to gather it during six days; but the seventh is the day of rest; on it there shall be none. Nevertheless, on the seventh day, some of the people went out to gather it; but they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will ye refuse to observe my commandments and my laws? Behold, the Lord hath given you the day of rest; wherefore He supplieth you on the sixth day with food for two days. Let every one, therefore, remain in his tent, and not go out therefrom on the seventh day. And the people rested on the seventh day. The house of Israel called this food manna; it was like unto coriander seed, but white, and its taste was like wafers with honey. And the children of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited country, on the confines of the land of Canaan.—And the children of Israel left the desert of Sin, and continued their journey according to the com-

mands of the Lord; and they encamped at Rephidim, and there was no water there to drink. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, Give us water to drink; and Moses said unto them, Why do ye quarrel with me? Why tempt ye the Lord? But the people, suffering from thirst, murmured against Moses, and said, Why hast thou brought us out of Egypt, to cause us to perish with thirst, us, our children, and our flocks? Moses, thereupon, prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto him, Pass before the people, and take with thee some of the elders of Israel; take, also, in thy hand the staff with which thou didst strike the river. Behold, I will stand before thee on the rock at Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come forth water, and the people shall drink. And Moses did so in the presence of the elders of Israel.

Now it was at Rephidim that the people of Amalek came to fight against Israel. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose out for us some men fit for war, and go out and fight Amalek. To-morrow I will be on the top of the hill, and the staff of God shall be in my hand. And Joshua did as Moses had directed him, and fought with Amalek. Moses, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of the hill; and it came to pass that when Moses held up his hand, Israel conquered; but when he held down his hand, Amalek prevailed; but as they saw that Moses' hands were heavy, they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat thereon; then Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on the right, the other on the left, so that his hands were steady until the going down of the sun; and Joshua defeated Amalek and his people.

X. Arrival of Jethro and his daughter Zipporah, with her two sons.

"Open rebuke is better than secret love."—*Proverbs* xxvii. 5.

When Jethro, the priest of Midian, and father-in-law of Moses, heard all that the Lord had done unto Moses and Israel his people; and that He had brought them out of the land of Egypt: he took his daughter Zipporah, and her two sons Gershom and Eliezer, and came with them unto Moses, in the desert, where he was encamped near the mount of God. And he sent word unto Moses saying, I, Jethro, thy father-in-law, am coming to thee with thy wife and her two sons. And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and embraced him; and they inquired of each other after their welfare, and then entered into the tent. And Moses related unto his father-in-law, all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh, and unto Egypt, on account of the Israelites, all the troubles they had suffered in their journeyings, and how the Lord had delivered them. Jethro rejoiced at all the good which the Lord had done unto the Israelites, that He had delivered them from the hand of the Egyptians. And Jethro said, Praised be the Lord, who hath delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh; now I know that the Eternal is greater than all the powers; for that by which they committed their iniquities is turned against them. And Jethro offered burnt-offer-

ings and sacrifices, unto God; afterwards Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat with the father-in-law of Moses, before God. The next day, Jethro, seeing that Moses sat to judge the people from morning till evening, said unto him, The thing which thou doest is not good; thou wilt certainly weary thyself, as well as the people; for the work is too heavy for thee; thou canst not undergo it alone. Listen to me: I will advise thee, and God will be with thee. Choose, from among the people, men that are virtuous, fearing God, men of truth who do not seek their own gain; and set them as rulers over thousands, rulers over hundreds, rulers over fifties, and rulers over tens; and let them judge the people at all times: let them bring before thee all the important matters, and the small cases let them decide themselves; that thou mayest have it easier, and that they may bear the burden with thee. Moses hearkened unto the counsel of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said unto him: he chose out virtuous men among the Israelites, and set them as heads over the people, rulers over thousands, rulers over hundreds, rulers over fifties, and rulers over tens. These judged the people at all times; and they brought all the difficult matters before Moses, and judged only the lighter causes. And Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he returned unto his country.

XI. Revelation on Mount Sinai. The Decalogue.

"He showeth His words unto Jacob; His statutes and His judgments unto Israel."—*Psalm* cxlvii. 19.

In the third month after the going out of the children of Israel from Egypt, they arrived at the wilderness of

Sinai, and encamped opposite the mount. Moses went up into the mount unto God, and the Lord called unto him from the mount, saying, Thus shalt thou say unto the house of Jacob, and shalt tell unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen what I have done unto the Egyptians, and that I have borne you on eagles' wings, and have brought you unto me. Now, if ye will hearken unto my voice, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be unto me a peculiar treasure above all the nations; for all the earth is mine; and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses told these words unto the elders of the people; and all the people answered unanimously, and said, All that the Eternal hath spoken we will do. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go to the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their garments, that they be prepared for the third day; for on that day, the Lord will descend, before all the people, on Mount Sinai. And Moses went down, and sanctified the people, and they washed their garments; and on the third day, when it was morning, there were thunder and lightning, and a thick cloud covered the mount, and the voice of cornets was exceedingly loud; and all the people in the camp trembled (with fear). And Moses brought them forth from the camp, toward the Divine Presence, and they stood at the foot of the mount. And Mount Sinai was smoking in every part; for the Lord had come down thereon in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount was vio-

lently shaken. Then the Lord spoke all these words, saying:

1. I am the Lord, thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

2. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in the heavens above, or on the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down unto them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a watchful God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; but showing mercy unto the thousandth generation of them that love me and keep my commandments.

3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

4. Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath, in honour of the Lord thy God; on it thou shalt not do any manner of work, neither thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

5. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be prolonged upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that appertaineth unto thy neighbour.

And all the people perceived the thunders and lightnings, the sound of the cornet and the smoking mount; and the people saw it, trembled and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou unto us, and we will hear; but let not God speak unto us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not; for God hath come but to prove you, in order that His fear may be upon you, so that ye may not sin. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew nigh unto the thick cloud, in which God appeared. And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that out of heaven I have spoken unto you; now ye shall place nothing beside me, neither shall ye make yourselves gods of silver and gods of gold. Thou shalt build me an altar of earth, on which thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings and thy peace-offering. In every place where I shall allow my name to be mentioned, I will come unto thee and bless thee.

XII. Some of the civil and penal Laws. Duties towards our Neighbour.

"To absolve the wicked, and condemn the righteous, are two things that are an abomination unto the Lord."—*Proverbs* xvii. 15.

Here are some of the laws which Moses set before the children of Israel by the command of the Lord.

He that striketh his father or mother shall be punished with death. He that curseth his father or his mother shall be put to death. He that sacrificeth to any other but the Eternal One, merits death. Thou shalt not insult, or oppress the stranger; for ye were yourselves strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict the widow, or the orphan; if ye afflict them, they will cry unto me, and I will hear their cry; and my anger will be kindled; and ye shall perish by the sword, and your wives shall become widows, and your children orphans. When thou lendest money to any of my people, to the poor that is near thee, be not as a usurer unto him; lay no interest from him. If thou takest in pledge the vestment of thy neighbour, thou shalt return it unto him before the setting of the sun; it is perhaps his only covering, the vestment with which he covers his body; on what shall he lie? When he crieth unto me, I will hear his prayer; for I am merciful. Ye shall be unto me a holy people. Ye shall not eat the flesh of an animal torn in the fields. Spread not abroad any false report. Favour not unjustly the poor in his quarrel. Join not thyself with the wicked to

be witness in favour of iniquity. Follow not a multitude to do evil. Speak not in a cause to pervert justice to please the people. If thou meet thy enemy's ox or ass going astray, thou shalt hasten to bring it back unto him. If thou see the ass of thy enemy lying under his burden, take care not to leave it; thou shalt surely help him to take the burden from it. Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause. Keep far away from any falsehood. Accept no presents; for gifts blind the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. Oppress not the stranger; ye know the feeling of the stranger, for ye were yourselves strangers in the land of Egypt. Six days shalt thou work; but the seventh day thou shalt rest, that thy ox and thy ass may rest, and the son of thy servant and the stranger may be refreshed. Ye shall serve the Eternal, your God; and He will bless thy food and thy drink; and I will remove all sickness far from thee.

XIII. Consecration of the Covenant. The two Tables of the Law.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding for all who practise it; his glory endureth for ever." —*Psalm* cxi. 10.

When Moses spoke unto the people all the words of the Lord, and all the laws, the whole nation answered unanimously, and said, All that the Eternal hath said, we will do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord; and, in the morning, he arose, and erected an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to

the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent the young men among the children of Israel (that is, the *first-born*), who offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Eternal. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half he sprinkled upon the altar: and he took the book of the covenant, and read it unto all the people; and they said, All that the Eternal hath said will we do and obey. Then Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Eternal hath made with you concerning all these words. And the Lord then said unto Moses, Come up unto me on the mountain and stay there; and I will give thee the tables of stone with the precepts and the commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them (unto the people). And Moses went up on the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the Eternal abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and on the seventh day He called unto Moses from the midst of the cloud. The appearance of the glory of the Eternal was as a devouring fire on the top of the mount, before the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and ascended the mount, and he remained there forty days and forty nights.

XIV. The Golden Calf.

"That they might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart is not reformed, and whose spirit is not faithful unto God."—*Psalm* lxxviii. 8.

And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mount, they gathered together around

Aaron and said unto him, Come, make us gods, that shall go before us; for as to this man, Moses, who brought us out from the land of Egypt, we know not what has become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Take out the golden ear-rings from the ears of your wives, of your sons, and your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people took out the golden ear-rings which were in their ears, and they brought them unto Aaron. And he took the gold from them, and fashioned it in a mould, and made thereof a molten calf. And they said, These are thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before (the idol), and he made proclamation and said, To-morrow is a feast unto the Eternal. And they arose in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings and brought peace-offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink and then rose up to play. In the mean time, by the command of the Lord Moses descended from the mount, and the two tables of the covenant were in his hands, written on both sides, in the handwriting of God, which was engraved on the tables. Joshua, the servant of Moses, hearing the tumultuous cries of the people, said unto Moses, There is a cry of war in the camp. But Moses remarked, It is not the cry of victory, nor the cry of defeat; but the voice of singing do I hear. And as he approached the camp, and saw the calf, and the dances, his anger was kindled, and he cast from his hands the tables, and broke them at the foot of the mount. Then he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it, and pounded it, until it became quite fine, and strewed it upon the water, and

caused the children of Israel to drink thereof. Moses then stood at the gate of the camp, and exclaimed, Let those who are faithful unto the Eternal come unto me; and all the children of Levi drew nigh unto him. And he said to them, Thus saith the Eternal, the God of Israel, Unsheath each man his sword, and go from gate to gate in the camp, and slay every man his brother, his companion, and his relative. The sons of Levi did as Moses commanded them; and there perished on that day about three thousand men of the people. The Lord likewise smote the people with a plague, on account of the calf which Aaron had been compelled to make. On the next day, Moses said unto the people, Ye have committed a great sin; yet now will I go up unto the Eternal, perhaps I may obtain forgiveness for your sin. Moses supplicated the Eternal, and said, O Lord, Eternal One! destroy not thy people and thy inheritance whom thou hast redeemed by thy greatness, whom Thou didst bring out of Egypt with great power. Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! heed not the stubbornness, the impiety, and the sin of this people. And the Lord forgave them, and removed the evil with which He had threatened them. And He said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like the former, and I will write on these tables the words, which were on the former ones, which thou hast broken. Moses did so, and went up unto mount Sinai, where he remained near the Lord forty days and forty nights, and during this time he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And the Lord wrote on the tables the words of the covenant, that is, the ten commandments. Now, when Moses again descended from

the mount, with the two tables of the covenant in his hand, the children of Israel saw that his face shone, and they feared to approach him. But Moses placed a veil over his face, while he spoke unto the people, but withdrew it when he went in to speak unto the Lord.

XV. Construction of the Tabernacle. External Worship.

"Ascribe unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; bring ye an offering, and come into his courts."—*Psalm* xcvi. 8.

Moses then spoke unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, whom he had caused to assemble, and said to them, This is what the Lord hath commanded to say unto you, Bring ye of your property an offering in honour of the Lord; every one, according to his free will, shall bring an offering, either of gold, silver, or copper; blue, crimson, or scarlet woollen yarn; twisted linen thread and goats' hair; rams' skins, dyed red, and badger skins, and shittim wood; oil for lighting, and spices for the anointing oil and for the incense; onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and the breast-plate.* And all skilful men among you shall come, and make whatever the Lord hath commanded. For thus had the Lord ordered, that they should make Him a sanctuary, so that He might come and dwell among them; wherefore they were to make the whole

* Two of the vestments which the high priest was to wear during his performance of the service in the temple and at the altar.

structure with all the vessels belonging to it, according to the model and form which the Lord had shown to Moses. And when the skilful men, at whose head were Bezalel and Aholiab, whom God had specially endowed with wisdom and understanding to do the work, had finished their labour, as the Lord had commanded it: they brought all their works unto Moses; and Moses blessed them. And it was on the first day of the first month of the second year of their departure from Egypt, that the Tabernacle was set up. After every thing was arranged in the tabernacle, Moses took the Covenant (*the tables of the law*), placed them in the Ark, and put it in the tabernacle; and he separated it from the other part of the sanctuary by the veil.* When Moses had completed this work, the cloud covered the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord filled the sanctuary. And when the cloud ascended from off the tabernacle, the children of Israel pursued their journeys; but so long as the cloud ascended not, they did not depart until it did ascend. For during the day the cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle, and a fire appeared on it at night, before the eyes of all the children of Israel in all their journeyings.

* A curtain ornamented with cherubim.

THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES,

OR LEVITICUS. ספר ויקרא

I. Ordinances concerning the Sacrifices.

"Whosoever offereth me praise, glorifieth me; unto him who seeketh the true path, will I show the salvation of God."—*Psalm* l. 23.

"The Lord is good and upright, and pointeth out the true path to sinners."—*Psalm* xxv. 8.

The Lord called Moses, and spoke unto him from the midst of the tabernacle, and said unto him, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any of you wisheth to bring an offering in honour of the Lord, ye can offer it of the herd or of the flock; but it must be without blemish. If your offerings be of the fowl-kind, it shall be a turtle-dove or a young pigeon. Ye may also make your offerings of fine flour, and ye shall then pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon; neglect not to put salt on all your offerings. But ye shall offer neither leaven nor honey as an offering to the Lord. If a man should bring a sin-offering, because he hath discovered his sin, he shall first confess his sin which he hath committed, and shall then offer as a sin-offering a ewe sheep or a she goat. And if it be for a trespass against God, and he hath not the means, he shall offer

two turtle-doves or two young pigeons; and if he have not even these, then shall he offer the tenth part of an ephah of flour, without oil or franckincense. And the priest shall make an atonement for him, on account of his sin, and it shall be forgiven unto him. If any one should have sinned, and committed a trespass against the Lord, in refusing unto his neighbour any thing that was deposited, or left with him to keep; in stealing, or unjustly retaining that which appertaineth unto his neighbour; or if having found that which was lost, he denieth it, and taketh a false oath; if he should have committed any of these faults, by which a man becometh guilty, and after having sinned, he acknowledgeth his fault: he shall return that which was stolen, or unjustly retained; that which was confided to him, or which he found, or that concerning which he had sworn falsely. He shall restore the principal, and add a fifth part thereof in addition to it, and give it unto the person to whom it belongeth, as soon as he discovereth his sin. Then also shall he offer unto the Lord a ram for a trespass-offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord, and he shall be forgiven.

II. Consecration of Aaron and his sons for the Priesthood. Death of Nadab and Abihu.

"Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and thy saints chaunt songs of joy."—*Psalm* cxxxii. 9.

When Moses had sacrificed the burnt-offerings, according to the command of the Lord, he took the anoint-

ing oil, and the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron and upon his garments, and upon the sons of Aaron and upon their garments. He sanctified them also, they and their garments, and consecrated them for the priestly service. Then he said unto Aaron and his sons, Ye shall not quit the tabernacle during seven days; for your installation shall occupy seven days. For thus hath the Lord commanded to be done. Aaron and his sons did all that the Lord had commanded by Moses. On the eighth day after Aaron and his sons had offered sacrifices unto the Lord, as Moses had ordered them, Aaron raised his hands towards the people, and blessed them. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle; and when they came forth again, they blessed the people, and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came forth a fire from before the Lord, and consumed the burnt-offerings and the fat which were upon the altar. And all the people saw it, and they shouted for joy, and fell upon their face unto the earth. Nevertheless, Nadab and Abihu, two sons of Aaron, took each his censer, put fire and incense therein, and presented unto the Lord a strange fire which He had not commanded them. And a fire went forth from the Lord, and consumed them; and they died before the Lord. And Moses said unto Aaron, This is what the Lord hath said, I will be sanctified by those that draw nigh unto me, and be glorified before all the people; and Aaron remained silent. And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel, Aaron's uncle, and said unto them, Come near, and carry your relatives from before the sanctuary out of the

camp; and they approached, as Moses had commanded them, and carried them, in their coats, out of the camp.

III. Laws concerning forbidden meats.

"Canst thou discover the intentions of God? or canst thou fathom the purposes of the Almighty?"—*Job* xi. 7.

"They that feign to sanctify and purify themselves in the groves and in the midst thereof, who eat swine's flesh, creeping things, and mice, shall all be destroyed together, saith the Lord."—*Isaiah* lxvi. 17.

And the Lord spoke unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, These are the animals which ye are permitted to eat from among the beasts. Every one, among the beasts, which divideth the hoof, is cloven-footed, and cheweth the cud, ye are permitted to eat. But ye shall not eat of that which cheweth the cud, yet is not cloven-footed, nor of that which divideth the hoof yet cheweth not the cud: it is unclean unto you. Of all that live in the waters, ye shall eat that which hath fins and scales. But of that which hath not fins or scales, whether in the seas or the rivers, ye shall not eat; it shall be an abomination unto you. Among birds, ye shall hold in abhorrence and eat not the eagle, the ostrich, the ospray; the vulture and the kite; the raven, the owl, the falcon, the cuckoo, and the hawk; the owlet, the king-fisher, and the great owl; the swan, the pelican, and the cormorant; the stork, the heron, of every kind, the lapwing, and the huppo. All flying insects that go upon four feet shall be

held in abomination. Every reptile which creepeth upon the earth shall ye hold in abhorrence; you shall not eat thereof. Ye shall not eat blood; for the blood is the life, and ye shall not eat it with the flesh. Neither shall ye eat of the flesh of an animal that hath died or been torn to pieces; whether it be beast or a bird; it shall be an abomination unto you. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that I might be unto you for a God. Ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. This is the law concerning the beasts and birds, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creeping thing that crawleth upon the earth: that ye may make a difference between clean and unclean, between the beast that may be eaten, and that which is not to be eaten.

IV. Religious and Social Laws.

"Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, I, the Lord thy God, teach thee that which is good for thee, and guide thee in the path which thou shouldst go."—*Isaiah* xlviii. 17.

The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy. Let every one fear his father and his mother, and keep my Sabbaths: I am the Lord your God. Turn ye not unto idols, and make not unto yourselves any molten gods: I am the Lord your God. And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not reap the corners of your fields, and thou shalt not gather the gleanings of

thy harvest. Neither shalt thou glean in thy vineyard, nor gather up the grapes that have fallen from thy vine; but thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the Lord your God. Ye shall not steal; neither deal falsely, nor lie one unto the other. Ye shall not swear falsely by my name; for thou wouldst thus profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord. Thou shalt not injure thy neighbour; thou shalt take nothing from him. Thou shalt not withhold the wages of the hireling until the morrow. Thou shalt not speak ill of the deaf (that is, *of the absent*); nor put a stumbling-block before the blind (that is, *thou shalt not abuse the inexperience of a person to deceive him by perfidious counsels*); but thou shalt fear thy God: I am the Lord. Do no injustice in judgments; favour not the poor; and have not regard unto the powerful; but judge thy neighbour with justice. Be not a tale-bearer among thy people. Stand not inactively by, when thy neighbour is in danger: I am the Lord. Hate not thy brother in thy heart; thou mayst reprove thy neighbour; but bear not resentment against him for his offence. Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people. LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF. Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of an old man, and thou shalt thus testify thy veneration for thy God: I am the Lord. If a stranger sojourn in your country, ye shall not oppress him; the stranger that sojourneth among you, shall be as one born among you; thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. You shall do no injustice in judgment, neither in your dry mea-

sure, weights, nor in other measures. Ye shall have just balances, and just weights. For I am the Lord, who have brought you out of the land of Egypt. Observe all my laws and judgments, and do them; I am the Lord.

V. Laws concerning the Celebration of the Festivals.

"On every new moon, and on every Sabbath shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord."—*Isaiah* xlvi. 23.

"If thou restrain thy foot on the Sabbath day, and pursue not thy occupation on my holy day, if thou call the Sabbath a delight, sanctified and honoured to the glory of the Lord, if thou honour Him by not doing thy usual occupations, omitting thy engagements, and not speaking of them: then shalt thou find delight in the Lord, and I will elevate thee above the heights of the earth, and will make thee enjoy the inheritance of Jacob, thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—*Isaiah* lviii. 13, 14.

The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and declare unto them the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim as holy convocations. These are my solemn feasts. During six days all manner of work may be done; but on the seventh day is a strict rest of the Sabbath for a holy convocation, on it shall ye do no manner of work; it is the day of rest consecrated to the Lord in all your habitations. These are the festivals of the Lord for holy convocation, which ye shall proclaim, each in its due season. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, in the afternoon, shall be offered the passover sacrifice, in honour of the Lord; and on the fifteenth day of this same month

is (the beginning of) the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread. The first and seventh days shall be a holy convocation, and ye shall do no work on these days. When ye come unto the land which I will give you, and ye shall have reaped the harvest: ye shall present to the priest an Omer* of the first fruits of the harvest, and he shall offer it unto the Lord, to obtain for you His favour. And ye shall reckon unto you from the morrow of this feast, from the day ye offer the Omer, seven full weeks: and on the morrow after the seventh week is completed, ye shall offer a new offering unto the Lord. It is the feast of the first fruits unto the Lord. On that day shall ye proclaim a holy convocation, and do no work thereon. And it shall be a perpetual law, in all your dwellings, in all your future generations.

The first day of the seventh month shall be a day of rest, on which ye shall sound the cornet in commemoration, and there shall be a holy convocation thereon. Ye shall do no manner of work on that day: it is a day of rest, a day on which the cornet shall be blown in honour of the Lord.

But the tenth day of the same month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation and a day of fasting. Ye shall do no manner of work on this day, it is the day of atonement, in which ye shall be reconciled unto the Lord your God. He that doth not fast on this day, shall be cut off from among his people: it shall be unto you a most solemn Sabbath, and ye shall fast. Ye

* The Omer is a grain-measure, the tenth part of an Ephah.

shall commence from the evening of the ninth day of the same month, and from this until the next evening, shall ye observe this day of rest. And it shall be an everlasting law through all your future generations, in all your dwellings. For on this day shall atonement be made for you, that ye may be purified, and ye shall be cleansed from all your sins before the Lord.

And on the fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles, (or tents,) seven days, unto the Lord. The first day shall be a holy convocation, and ye shall do no work thereon; the eighth day ye shall also keep a holy convocation; it is the solemn assembly; ye shall do no work on that day. Ye shall thus celebrate the feast unto the Lord, commencing on the fifteenth day. The first and the eighth days shall be Sabbaths unto you. But on the first day shall ye take of the fruit of the tree Hadar (citron), branches of the palm, a sprig of the tree Aboth (myrtle), and the willow of the brook, and ye shall rejoice before the Lord, your God, seven days. And this feast shall be unto you an everlasting law in all your future generations. Ye shall dwell in booths for seven days; all that are born in Israel shall dwell in booths. That your descendants may know that I caused the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. And Moses spoke to the children of Israel concerning the festivals of the Lord.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES, OR NUMBERS. ספר במדבר

I. The Numbering of the People. The Tribe of Levi consecrated to the Divine Service. Formula of the Benediction which the Priests should bestow on the People of Israel.

"The priests, the men of the tribe of Levi, the children of Zadok who have faithfully kept the observance of my sanctuary, while the children of Israel wandered astray from me, these shall draw unto me to serve me."—*Ezekiel* xliv. 15.

On the first day of the second month of the second year after their departure from Egypt, the Lord spoke unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle, and said unto him, Number all the congregation of Israel, according to their families, and according to their lineage; by numbering all the males of Israel, according to their heads. And thou and Aaron shall number all that are able to go to the army from twenty years of age and upward. One chief of a family of each tribe shall assist you in your labour. Moses and Aaron did as they were commanded; and all those whom they numbered, of all Israel of twenty years and upward, able to go to the army, were six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty. But the Levites were not counted among

them, according to the tribe of their fathers; for the Lord had said unto Moses, Thou shalt not number the children of Levi, and not take their account among the children of Israel; but thou shalt appoint the Levites for the custody of the tabernacle of the testimony, of its utensils, and all that appertaineth thereunto. They shall carry the tabernacle, and all its implements; they shall do the service thereof, and shall encamp around it. When the tabernacle is to be removed, the Levites shall take it down; and when it is to stop, they shall set it up; and the stranger that approacheth it shall die. For I have chosen the Levites in the place of all the first-born of the children of Israel, and the Levites shall be mine.—Nevertheless the Levites shall be joined unto Aaron and his sons; they shall, under their superintendence, perform the service of the sanctuary; but Aaron and his sons shall regulate the service.

The Lord spoke unto Moses and said to him, Thus shalt thou say unto Aaron and his sons: Thus shall ye bless the children of Israel, saying unto them:

The Lord bless and preserve thee!

The Lord cause His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee!

The Lord lift up His face towards thee, and give thee peace!

Thus shall they lay my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.

II. Murmurings of the Israelites. Punishment for their desire.

"The pious man eateth to satisfy his wants; but the belly of the wicked is always wanting."—*Prov.* xiii. 25.

And the mixed multitude that were among the people, abandoned themselves to all sorts of desires, and the Israelites themselves began again to weep, and to say, Who will give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we ate for nothing in Egypt; the cucumbers, the melons, the lettuce, the onions, and the garlic. And now our life passes without comforts: we have nothing; but manna is our only food. Moses overheard the people in all their families; every one thus lamenting at the door of his tent; the Lord was exceedingly wroth, and Moses was much afflicted. Moses then said unto the Lord, Wherefore afflictest Thou thus thy servant? Why have I not found grace in Thy sight, that Thou shouldst burden me with the load of all this people? Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that Thou shouldst say unto me, Bear them in thy arms, as the nurse beareth the sucking child, unto the land which I have promised to their fathers? Whence shall I obtain flesh to give unto all this people, who weep around me, saying, Give us flesh that we may eat? The Lord thereupon said unto Moses, Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and capable of being rulers; bring them be-

fore the tabernacle, and let them remain there near unto thee. Then will I descend, and will speak unto thee, and I will take from the spirit that is upon thee, and I will put it upon them, that they may aid thee to bear the burden of this people, and thou shalt not bear it alone. And to the people thou shalt say, Prepare yourselves for to-morrow, and ye shall eat flesh; for the Lord hath heard your lamentations, and will give you flesh to eat. Ye shall not eat it for a day, nor for two days, five, ten, or twenty days; but for an entire month; until it come out from your nostrils and ye loathe it; for ye have disregarded the Lord who is in the midst of you, and have wept before him, saying, Why did we go out from Egypt? But Moses replied, The people, in the midst of whom I am, are six hundred thousand, and Thou sayest, I will give them flesh which they shall eat for a whole month. Shall sheep and oxen be killed for them, or shall all the fishes of the sea be caught for them, that they may have enough? And the Lord replied unto Moses, saying, Is the hand of the Lord shortened (*powerless*)? thou shalt soon see whether it shall come to pass according to my word or not. Moses reported unto the people all the words of the Lord, and he assembled likewise seventy of the elders of the people, and placed them around the tabernacle. The Lord descended in a cloud, and spoke unto them, and took of the spirit which was upon him and put it upon the seventy elders. As soon as the spirit was upon them, they prophesied, but only for that once. Now two men, Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp, although they had been selected among the seventy; and the Spirit rested upon them in

the camp, tho' they had not gone before the tabernacle, and they also prophesied. And a young man ran and told Moses, saying, Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp. Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' faithful servant, said unto him, My lord Moses! forbid them. But Moses said unto him, Art thou jealous for me? Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them. Moses then returned to the camp, he, and the elders of Israel. And a great wind arose by the will of the Lord, and drove a very great quantity of quails from the shores of the sea, and spread them all over the camp, the distance of about a day's journey on each side, and about two cubits high, upon the face of the earth. And the people spent all that day and night, and the next day in gathering the quails. He who had the least, had ten homers. But the flesh was yet between their teeth; they had not yet chewed it: when the anger of the Lord rose against the people, and He smote the people with a terrible plague. They named this place Kibroth-Hataavah (the graves of desire), for they buried there all the people who had so desired (flesh). And the people went from there to Hazeroth.

III. Miriam and Aaron slander Moses.

"There are words like to the stabs of a sword; but the tongue of the wise is healing."—*Prov.* xii. 18.

"A foolish woman clamoureth; she is simple, and knoweth not what she wanteth."—*Prov.* ix. 13.

Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, in respect to

the Ethiopian woman whom he had taken; for he had taken an Ethiopian woman as wife: and they said, Hath the Lord spoken only through Moses? Hath He not also spoken through us likewise? And the Lord heard their words. Now Moses was the meekest of all men upon the earth. The Lord spoke suddenly unto Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, Go all three of ye into the tabernacle: and they went in; and the Lord descended in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the entrance of the tabernacle, and He called unto Aaron and Miriam, and they both came out. And He said, Hearken unto my words. To a prophet such as you, I, the Eternal, make myself known in a vision: to such I speak in a dream; but it is not thus with my servant Moses, who is the faithful in all my house. To him do I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speeches; and he beholdeth the apparition of the Lord. Why then did ye not fear to speak against my servant Moses? The anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and He departed. The cloud removed from the tabernacle, and lo! Miriam was covered with leprosy white as snow. Then Aaron said unto Moses, I beseech thee, impute not to us as sin, our having acted foolishly, and having thus sinned: let her not be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed at the birth. And Moses cried unto the Lord, O God! I pray thee, do Thou heal her! And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had spit in her face, would she not be ashamed seven days? Let her then remain seven days shut out from the camp,* and afterwards she shall

* Lepers and other unclean persons were shut out from the camp.

be admitted. So Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days, and the people journeyed not until Miriam was permitted to return into the camp. Afterwards the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched their tents in the desert of Paran.

IV. Men are sent to explore the land of Canaan: they make a false report unto the people. Terrible consequence and punishment of their falsehood.

"They search out iniquitous deeds, they hide them carefully, each in the bottom of their innermost part, and their hearts. But their own tongue betrayeth them, and all who see them recoil in dismay."—*Psalm* lxiv. 7—9.

"The lips of the righteous feed a multitude; but fools die for the want of wisdom."—*Prov.* x. 21.

Moses, as God had commanded him, sent twelve of the principal men of Israel, one from each tribe, to explore the land of Canaan. He said unto them, Examine the state of the country, and the people who inhabit it; if they be strong or weak; if they be in great number or few; observe if the country they inhabit be good or bad; if their towns are open or walled in; if their soil be fat or lean; if fruit trees do grow there or not; be bold, and bring away some of the fruits of the country. And it was the time of the ripening of the grapes. They departed, and explored the country from the desert of Zin unto Rechob, on the road to Hamath. And they took the southern road, and came to Hebron; and having arrived at the valley of Eshkol (of grapes), they cut there a branch with one cluster of grapes, and two of the men

bore it upon their shoulders across a pole ; they gathered also some pomegranates and figs. At the end of forty days they returned from the country which they had explored : and they made their report unto Moses and Aaron, in the presence of all the congregation, saying, We have been in the land to which thou didst send us ; it is truly a country flowing with milk and honey ; but the people who dwell therein are mighty ; the towns are also very strong and large, and we saw there also the descendants of Anak, giants, at whose side we appeared to ourselves only as grasshoppers. Thus they made a false and unfavourable report of the country, and they added, We dare not march against the people of the country ; for they are too mighty for us. Then all the assembly became excited, and rent the air with their cries, and wept during the whole night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, Would to God that we had died by the hand of the Lord in Egypt, or that we might die in this wilderness ! Why doth the Lord bring us unto that country, that we may fall by the sword? Our wives and our children will become the prey (of the enemy). Is it not better that we return unto Egypt? And they even said one to another, Let us elect a chief and return unto Egypt. Moses and Aaron then fell on their faces before the whole congregation of the children of Israel. But Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephuneh, who were of those who had explored the land, rent their garments, and spoke unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, The country which we have passed through to spy it out, is a delightful country. If it please the Lord

He will bring us thither, and give it unto us. But be not rebellious against the Lord, and ye need not dread the people of the land; we shall consume them like bread. Their strength hath departed from them, whilst the Lord is with us; ye need not fear them. And all the assembly spoke to stone them (Joshua and Caleb); but the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle to all the children of Israel. And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, How long will this people still provoke me? and how long will they still not believe in me, notwithstanding all the miracles which I have done in the midst of them? I will smite them with the pestilence and destroy them; and I will make thee become a nation mightier and greater than they. But Moses besought the Lord, and said, May Thy power, O Lord! be magnified, as Thou hast said, The Lord is long-suffering and abounding in mercy, He forgiveth iniquity and transgression. O pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy, and as Thou hast pardoned them even from Egypt until this day. And the Lord said, I forgive, according to thy words; nevertheless, truly as I exist eternally, and all the earth is filled with my glory, so of all the men who have seen my glory and the miracles which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and who have already tempted me these ten times and have not hearkened unto my voice, not one shall see the land which I swore unto their fathers to give unto them; and all those who have incensed me shall not see it. But Caleb, the son of Jephuneh, and Joshua, the son of Nun, shall enter into this land; for they have been animated by a right spirit, and have

persisted in faithfully serving me. As to the children of Israel, say unto them, Thus speaketh the Lord, Truly as I exist eternally, I will act unto you according to what ye yourselves have spoken; your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness, all that were numbered among you from twenty years old and upwards, ye that have murmured against me. But your children, of whom ye did say, They would become a spoil unto the enemy, I will make them enter therein, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. Nevertheless, your children shall wander in this wilderness forty years, and shall bear the punishment of your crimes, until all your carcasses shall have fallen in the wilderness. According to the number of the days which ye employed in exploring the land, that is forty days, a year for each day; during forty years shall ye bear the punishment of your perverseness, that ye may learn to know the consequences of the withdrawal of my favour. Now the men whom Moses had sent to explore the land, and who had made a false and unfavourable report thereof, soon after died of a plague which the Lord sent upon them. Joshua and Caleb alone survived. When Moses spoke unto the children of Israel all that the Lord had said unto him, all the people mourned greatly. And in the morning they arose, and went up unto the top of the mountain, and said, Lo, we are ready to go unto the place of which the Lord hath spoken; we acknowledge that we have sinned. But Moses said unto them, Why will ye yet more transgress the orders of the Lord? It will not prosper. Go not up, for the Lord is not with you, that ye be not beaten by your enemies. The Amalekite and

the Canaanite are there before you, and ye will fall by the sword; for as ye have ceased to follow the Lord, He will not be among you. Yet they blindly determined to go up to the top of the mountain; though the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and Moses, moved not from amidst the camp. And the Amalekites and Canaanites, who dwelt in that mountain, came down against them, smote them, and drove them back even unto Hormah.

V. Sedition and Punishment of Korach and his Accomplices.

"The earth opened, and swallowed up Dathan, and covered over the faction of Abiram."—*Psalm* cvi. 17.

"My son! fear the Lord and the king; and associate not with the seditious."—*Proverbs* xxiv. 21.

Korach, the son of Izhar, of the tribe of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, of the tribe of Reuben, rebelled one day: they rose up against Moses, and with them were two hundred and fifty men of the children of Israel, of the heads of the congregation, members of the council, and men of distinction. They united together against Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, Ye arrogate unto yourselves too much authority; for the whole congregation consists of holy men, and the Lord is in the midst of them: wherefore then do ye elevate yourselves above the assembly of the Lord? When Moses heard them speak thus, he fell down upon his face. He then said unto Korach, and unto his confederates, To-morrow will the Lord make known who appertaineth unto Him, and him who is holy

he will cause to draw nigh unto Him, and him whom He will choose He will cause to come near unto Him. Do this: take yourselves censers, and put therein fire and incense before the Lord to-morrow; and he whom the Lord will then choose shall be the holy one. And he said also unto Korach, Hearken, ye sons of Levi, sufficeth it not for you that the Lord hath selected you from among the congregation, to cause you to draw near unto Him, by entrusting you with the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, that now ye aspire too unto the priesthood? Take heed, thou and all thy faction, who conspire against the Lord! For who is Aaron that ye should murmur against him? Then Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram; but they sent word back, We will not come. Is it not enough that thou didst bring us out from a land flowing with milk and honey, to let us perish in this desert; wouldst thou also exercise dominion over us? Hast thou then led us into a land flowing with milk and honey, and hast thou given us possession of fields and vineyards? Thinkest thou to blind the eyes of these people? We will not come. Moses was very angry, and he said unto the Lord, Respect not their offering; I have not taken an ass from any one of them, neither have I done one of them any wrong.

Now the two hundred and fifty men took censers, placed fire and incense thereon, and stood at the entrance of the tabernacle, as did likewise Moses and Aaron. But Korach gathered all the congregation against them at the entrance of the tabernacle. And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, Separate your-

selves from this congregation, and I will annihilate them in an instant. But they fell upon their faces, and said, God, the Lord of the spirits of all flesh! shall one man sin, and thy wrath be excited against all the congregation? And the Lord then said unto Moses, Speak unto the congregation in these words, Withdraw yourselves far from the dwelling of Korach, Dathan, and Abiram. Moses then arose, and went unto Dathan and Abiram, followed by the elders of Israel. And he spoke to the congregation and said, Remove yourselves from the tents of these wicked men; touch nothing that belongeth unto them, lest you perish with them through the enormity of their sins. They withdrew thereupon from the dwelling of Korach, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood insolently at the door of their tents, with their wives and their children. And Moses said, Hereby shall ye know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these things, and that I have done nothing of my own will: if these men die the common death of all men, and if they suffer the common destiny of all men, then hath the Lord not sent me. But if the Lord create a new thing, and the earth be opened and swallow them up, and all belonging unto them, and they descend alive into the grave: then shall ye know that these men have provoked the Lord. Scarcely had he finished speaking these words, when the ground split under them; and the earth was opened, and swallowed them up, with their families, and all the men that appertained unto Korach, and all their goods. And they descended alive into the grave, when the earth closed over them, and they disappeared from among the congrega-

tion. And all the Israelites that were round about them fled at their shrieks; for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. And a fire came from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that had offered the incense.

Notwithstanding these events, the next day the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, It is you who have caused the death of the people of the Lord. And the cloud descended immediately, covered the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord appeared. The anger of the Lord was soon made manifest; and a dreadful mortality commenced among the people. But by the order of Moses, Aaron ran into the midst of the congregation, and burnt incense and made an atonement for the people; and he stood between the dead and the living, and the mortality ceased.

A new miracle afterwards confirmed the priesthood of Aaron. Among twelve staves, on each of which was written the name of a chief of the tribes of Israel, and which, by the order of the Lord, were placed in the tabernacle, that of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi, alone blossomed; it produced buds, flowers, and almonds. By this sign, the Lord said, they should know whom He had chosen.

VI. Death of Miriam. Murmurings of the People. Moses causes Water to flow from a Rock. Death of Aaron.

"He opened the rock, and the waters gushed forth; like a brook they flowed in the parched wilderness."—*Psalm* cv. 41.

"No man on earth is so righteous as to do always good, and never sin."—*Ecclesiastes* vii. 20.

The people of Israel had encamped near Kadesh. There Miriam died, and was buried there. The congregation, wanting water, rose again against Moses and Aaron; and the people quarrelled with Moses, saying, Would that we had died with our brethren before the Lord! Wherefore have ye led the Lord's people into this desert to die, we and our cattle? Why have ye brought us out of Egypt, to lead us into this place, where we cannot sow; where there are neither figs, nor grapes, nor pomegranates; where there is not even water to drink? And Moses and Aaron withdrew from the congregation, and fell upon their faces at the entrance of the tabernacle; and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them. And the Lord said unto Moses, Take the staff, assemble the congregation, thou and Aaron, thy brother, and in their presence ye shall speak to the rock to give forth its water; and thou shalt thus supply them with water from the rock, and thou shalt give drink to the congregation and to their cattle. Moses took the staff from before the Lord, as He had commanded him.

Moses and Aaron assembled all the people together before the rock, and Moses said unto them, Listen, ye rebels! shall we bring forth water for you from this rock? Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff; and the water gushed forth in abundance, so that all the congregation and their cattle could drink.

But the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye had not faith in me to sanctify me before all the children of Israel: therefore shall ye not lead this people into the land which I have promised to give unto them. These are the waters of Meribah (quarrelling), because here the children of Israel quarrelled against the Lord; but He was sanctified among them.

The children of Israel departed from Kadesh, and arrived near the Mount Hor, on the confines of Edom. There the Lord said unto Moses, Aaron is to be gathered unto his people (that is, *he is to die*); for he shall not enter into the land which I give unto the Israelites. Take thou Aaron and his son Elazar, and cause them to go up on Mount Hor. There shalt thou strip Aaron of his garments, and shalt put them upon Elazar, his son; for Aaron shall die there. And Moses did as the Lord had commanded him, and they went up the mount in the presence of all the congregation: and Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Elazar, his son, and Aaron died there on the top of the mount; when Moses and Elazar descended. And when the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, the whole house of Israel mourned for him thirty days.

VII. The venomous Serpents. Conquest of the country of Sichon, King of Amorites, and of Og, King of Bashan.

"Come, let us return unto the Lord! He woundeth, yet will He heal us; He smiteth, yet will He bind up our wounds."—*Hosea* vi. 1.

"The Lord frustrateth the counsel of the heathen; He rendereth as naught the devices of the nations."—*Psalm* xxxiii. 10.

Arad, a Canaanitish king, hearing that the Israelites were advancing by the way which the spies (of Moses) had taken, went out against them, attacked them, and took some prisoners. Then Israel besought the Lord; and He hearkened unto the cry of Israel, and delivered the Canaanites into their hands, and they entirely defeated them. Then they departed from Mount Hor, by the way of the Red Sea, to go round the country of Edom (Idumea); but the people, disheartened again by the fatigues of the journey, began to renew their murmurs against God and Moses; and they said, Why did you bring us out of the land of Egypt? to cause us to perish in this desert, where there is neither bread nor water; and we are sick of this miserable food (the *manna*). And the Lord sent among them poisonous serpents, (named *Seraphim*,) which bit the people, and there died a great many Israelites. Then the people came unto Moses, and said, We have sinned in murmuring against the Lord, and against thee; yet supplicate the Lord that

He remove from us the serpents; and Moses prayed unto the Lord for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a saraph, and place it upon a pole; and let whosoever is bitten look at this symbol, and his life shall be saved. And Moses made a brazen serpent, which he placed as a symbol upon a pole, and when any one was bitten, he raised his eyes towards the brazen serpent and his life was saved.*

Some time afterwards, Israel sent ambassadors unto Sichon, the king of the Amorites, to say unto him, Permit us to pass through thy dominions; we will turn in neither fields nor vineyards, nor will we drink the water in thy cisterns; we will travel on the high road, until we shall have passed thy borders. But Sichon would not grant them a passage through his land; but he assembled all his people, and advanced against Israel, into the desert, and attacked them. But Israel cut them in pieces, and conquered their country, from Arnon unto Yabbok. And the Israelites took possession of all the towns of the land of the Amorites, and established themselves therein. And as after some time, they journeyed upward, towards Bashan, Og, king of Bashan, marched against them, with all his people, to fight with Israel. But the Lord said unto Moses, Fear him not; for I will deliver him into thy hands, all his people, and all his land. The Israelites smote him, his sons, and his people, so that not one escaped, and they conquered his

* The Talmud comments thus on this passage: "Whenever the Israelites, moved by repentance, cast their eyes up to heaven, and returned unto the Lord, they were saved; but if they persisted in their evil way, they perished."—Treatise Roshhashana, fol. 29.

country. Then the children of Israel continued their journeys, and encamped in the plains of Moab, near Jordan, opposite Jericho.

VIII. Balak and Balaam (Bileam).

"The ways of man are from the Lord; how can a man then understand whither his path will lead him?"—*Proverbs* xx. 24.

"The Lord is with me, I will not fear; what can man do unto me?"—*Psalm* cxviii. 6.

When Balak, king of Moab, saw what Israel had done to the Amorites, he was sorely distressed; for the children of Israel had inspired him with great terror. And he sent messengers to Balaam (Bileam), the son of Beor, at Pethor, near the Euphrates, to come to him. He sent to tell him, Behold a people have come out from Egypt, who cover the earth even as far as the eye extends, and they are encamped opposite me. Come now, I pray thee, and curse me this people; for they are mightier than I; peradventure I may then be successful in conquering them and driving them from the land; for I know that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed. The elders of Moab and of Midian, set out together, and came unto Balaam, and repeated unto him that which Balak had said. And he said unto them, Tarry here this night, and to-morrow will I give you an answer, according as the Lord shall direct me. And the Moabish lords stayed with Balaam. And God came unto Balaam, and said unto him, Go not with them, and curse not this people; for they are blessed. When Balaam rose in the morning, he said unto the lords of Balak, Return to

your country; for the Lord will not permit me to go with you. And the lords of Moab arose, returned unto Balak, and said unto him, Balaam hath refused to come with us. And Balak again sent other lords, more numerous and honourable than the former. They arrived, and spoke unto Balaam, Thus saith Balak, the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee to come to me; for I will bestow on thee great honours, and I will do all that thou shalt say unto me; only come, I pray thee, and curse me this people. But Balaam replied to the messengers of Balak, Were Balak to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not in aught transgress the commands of the Lord my God, to undertake any thing, be it little or great. Nevertheless, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the Lord will say unto me. And God came again unto Balaam, at night, and said unto him, If these men be come to call thee, thou mayest arise and go with them; but thou shalt do that only which I shall say unto thee. Then Balaam arose early in the morning, saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. And the anger of the Lord was kindled, because he departed with such eagerness: and an angel of the Lord placed himself in his way to impede him. Now Balaam was mounted on his ass, and his two young men were with him. And the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with a drawn sword in his hand, and the ass stepped out of the road and went into the field; and Balaam smote the ass that she might return into the highway. But the angel of the Lord passed on to a narrow pathway between two vineyards, where there was a wall on each side; and the

ass, perceiving the angel, pressed against the wall, and squeezed Balaam's foot against the wall, and he smote her again. Then the angel of the Lord removed and stood in a narrow place, where there was no path to turn to the right or the left; and when the ass perceived the angel again, she lay down under Balaam: and Balaam became very angry, and smote her again with his stick. But the Lord permitted the ass to speak; and she said unto Balaam, What have I done, that thou hast struck me these three times? And Balaam replied, Because thou hast mocked me; would that I had a sword in my hand, I would slay thee. But the ass replied, Am not I thy ass on which thou always ridest? have I ever treated thee thus? He replied, No.

Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand: and he bowed his head and prostrated himself to the earth. The angel of the Lord then said unto him, Why didst thou strike thy ass these three times? I came forth to impede thee; for thou hast undertaken with too much eagerness this journey, which is hateful unto me. And the ass saw me and turned away these three times; had she not turned away I would have slain thee, but would have spared her. Balaam said unto the angel, I have sinned; yet I knew not thou stoodest in the way. Now if my journey displeaseth thee, I will return. But the angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, Go with these men, but speak only that which I shall speak unto thee. Then Balaam proceeded with the Moabitish princes. When Balak learnt that Balaam was coming, he went out to meet him in one of the towns on

the frontiers of Moab; and he said unto Balaam, Did I not send for thee to come unto me? wherefore didst thou not come? didst thou think I could honour thee suitably? Balaam replied, Lo! I am come now unto thee; nevertheless, does it lie with me to say whatever I please? That only can I speak which the Lord may put into my mouth. On the morrow Balak led Balaam to the high-place of Baal, and showed him a portion of the people. Balaam said unto Balak, Erect me here seven altars, and furnish me seven oxen and seven rams. Balak did what Balaam said; and they offered together an ox and a ram on each altar. And Balaam said unto Balak, Stay here with thy burnt-offerings, and I will go afar off; peradventure the Lord will appear unto me, and I will tell unto thee what He shall make known unto me. And he withdrew to the top of the mountain. And God appeared unto Balaam, to whom he said, I have erected seven altars, and have offered an ox and a ram upon each. And the Lord put a speech into the mouth of Balaam, and said unto him, Return unto Balak, and speak thus (unto him.) And he returned unto Balak, who was standing near his offerings, and the princes of Moab were with him. And Balaam commenced his inspired address, and said, Balak, king of Moab, hath brought me from Aram, from the mountains of the East; Come, (hath he said unto me,) curse me Jacob; pour out imprecations on Israel. How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? how shall I denounce whom the Lord hath not denounced? I perceive them from the top of the rocks: I contemplate them from the summit of the hills: behold, they are a people that shall live distinct;

and shall not be reckoned among the (unfaithful) nations. Who can count the multitude of Jacob, innumerable as the sand? Who shall tell the number of even the fourth part of Israel? O! let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like unto his! And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done to me? To curse my enemies did I send for thee, and, lo! thou blessest them. But he answered, Am I not compelled to utter faithfully what the Lord may put into my mouth? Balak then said unto him, Come with me to another place whence thou canst see them; yet but a part, and not the whole, wilt thou be able to see, and curse me them from there. And he led him to the top of Mount Pisgah, and he built there seven altars, and offered an ox and a ram on each. Then Balaam withdrew as before, and returned after the Lord had told him what he should speak; and he said, Listen unto me, O Balak! lend thy ear, O son of Zippor! God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man, that He should change his purposes; should He speak and not do it? should He say and not accomplish his word? He hath ordered me to bless: He hath blessed, and I cannot revoke aught therein. There is no calamity for Jacob; no affliction for Israel. The Lord his God is with him; the divine majesty dwelleth in the midst of him. The mighty God who brought him from Egypt, is to him as the strength of the Reëm. No enchantment is powerful against Jacob; no divination efficacious against Israel. Jacob and Israel shall one day know what God hath wrought (for them). Behold this people; it riseth up as a lioness; as the lion it lifteth itself up, and lieth not down until it hath devoured its

prey, and hath drunk the blood of the slain (enemies). Balak then said to Balaam, Curse them not, but at least cease to bless them. And he took Balaam unto the top of Mount Peor, which overlooketh the wilderness, and he said, Perhaps God will permit thee to curse this people from here. But Balaam, raising his eyes and seeing the whole camp of Israel, was seized with the divine spirit, and said, How beautiful are thy tents, O Jacob! thy dwelling-places, O Israel! They are spread out like rivulets; as gardens on the borders of the streams, as aloes which the Lord hath planted, as cedars near the waters. The water runneth from his buckets, his seed falleth on moist ground; his king shall be more powerful than Agag; and his empire more exalted. God who brought him out of Egypt is to him as the strength of the Reëm; he shall eat up the nations who are his enemies, and break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows. He coucheth, he lieth down as the lion and the lioness; who shall stir him up? Blessed be he who blesseth thee, and cursed be he that curseth thee! Then Balak was so incensed that he smote his hands together; and he said unto him, To curse my enemies did I call thee, and now thou hast blessed them these three times. Now fly, return into thy country; I had intended to bestow on thee great honours; but the Lord hath deprived thee of this glory. But Balaam replied unto him, Said I not unto the messengers whom thou didst send unto me, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not transgress the commands of the Lord, to do good or evil of my own mind; but what the Lord shall say unto me, that will I

speak. Balaam then predicted what Israel should do unto the people of Moab; and after giving a counsel pernicious to the Israelites, he returned unto his country, and Balak also returned unto his place.

IX. The Tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Menasseh desire to establish themselves in the conquered Lands on the east side of Jordan.

"Strengthen ye the weak hands; sustain the trembling knees; say unto the timid of heart, Be strong, fear not; your God will come with vengeance, yea with a mighty recompense, He will come and save you."—*Isaiah* xxxv. 3, 4.

The children of Reuben and those of Gad, who had large flocks, had seen that the land of Jazer and of Gilead was favourable for the raising of cattle, and they came before Moses and Elazar, and the heads of the people, and said unto them, The land this side of Jordan, which the Lord hath delivered unto the Israelites, is a land suitable for the raising of cattle, and thy servants have cattle. If now we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and let us not pass over the Jordan. And Moses replied unto them, Shall your brothers go unto the war, and you will remain behind here? And why will you thus dishearten the children of Israel, and turn them from going over to the land which the Lord hath given them? It was thus your fathers did, when I sent them from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land; they returned, after having entered the valley of Eshkol, and discouraged the

people from entering the land which the Lord had given them. But they drew nigh unto Moses, and said, We will only build sheepfolds for our cattle, and houses for our families; but as for us, we will go up without delay before the children of Israel, until we have brought them into the place which is destined for them. But during that time, let our families dwell in the fortified towns, that they may be in safety against the inhabitants of the country. We will not return unto our houses until the children of Israel have taken possession each of his inheritance. And we demand not possessions on the other side of the Jordan, if ye grant us our inheritance (*here*) on the east side of the Jordan. Then Moses said unto them, If ye will do this, if ye will bear arms before the Lord, and fight His enemies until He shall have driven them out from before Him; and if ye return not hither until ye have acquitted yourselves of your duty unto the Lord and unto Israel: this land shall become your property before the Lord. But if ye do not so, ye shall be guilty before the Lord, and ye shall bear the consequences of your sin. Build yourselves then towns for your families, and sheepfolds for your cattle, and fulfil the promise you have made. They replied, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth. Moses then gave to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Menasseh, the kingdom of Sichon, king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan, and all the lands and towns comprised in their boundaries.

X. Institution of the Cities of Refuge, or Asylums for those who may commit an involuntary murder.

"Save those who are dragged unto death; and leave not those who are stretched out to be slaughtered. Say not, Lo, we know not this man. He who readeth the hearts, and watcheth over thy life, He surely knoweth, and He will render unto every one according to his works."—*Prov.* xxiv. 11, 12.

The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye shall have passed the Jordan, to enter into the land of Canaan, ye shall point out cities which shall be for refuge, where such may flee as may have slain a man involuntarily. These cities shall be for a refuge against the avenger of the blood,* so that the murderer shall not die until he shall have appeared in judgment before the congregation. Ye shall institute six cities of refuge; that is, three on this side of the Jordan, and three in the land of Canaan. The congregation shall judge, according to the law, between the (unintentional) murderer, and the avenger of blood; and shall thus save the involuntary homicide, and send him back to the city of refuge into which he had fled *before judgment.* And he shall reside there until the death of the high-priest; and after the death of the high-priest

* The nearest relative of the person killed was at liberty to avenge the blood of the victim.

he may return unto the land which he formerly possessed. But ye shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer who meriteth death; he shall surely die. Ye shall not defile the land in which ye live; for blood defileth the land; and there can be no expiation for the blood spilt in the land, but with the blood of him that hath shed it. Ye shall then not render unclean the land in which ye dwell, and in the midst of which I reside; for I, the Lord, dwell in the midst of the children of Israel.

THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES, OR DEUTERONOMY. כפר דברים

I. Moses exhorts the Israelites to gratitude and devotion towards God, and beneficence to their brethren.

"Happy are the undefiled in their way, who walk in the law of the Lord."—*Psalm* cxix. 1.

"If thou hast compassion on the hungry, and satisfiest the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness shall be as the noon-day."—*Isaiah* lviii. 10.

It was on the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, that Moses spoke unto the children of Israel as the Lord had commanded him. He assembled all the people and said unto them, Hearken, O Israel! to the precepts and the laws which I proclaim this day before you: learn them well, and observe to do them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. For it is not with our fathers that the Lord made this covenant, but with us, who are all now here alive this day. The Lord spoke with you face to face, on the mount, from the midst of the fire. Ye stood below the mountain, whence the flame extended unto heaven, while the base was enveloped in darkness, clouds, and a thick

darkness. The Lord spoke with you from amidst the fire. Ye heard distinctly the words (*the Ten Commandments*) which He hath ordered you to observe; He wrote them Himself on two tables of stone which He gave unto me. It hath been clearly shown unto you that the Eternal One is the True God, and that there is none beside Him. His voice He caused you to hear from the height of heaven, to teach you to obey; and on earth hath He shown you his great fire. And because He did love your fathers, He chose their descendants after them, and He brought you out from Egypt with a mighty hand, to drive out before you nations more powerful and more numerous than you, and to give you their land in possession, as He hath already begun to do this day. Know, then, and remember well in your heart, that the Lord is the only one God, in heaven above, and on earth beneath, and that there is none else. Keep, then, His laws, and His commandments, which I command you this day, that ye may be happy, you and your children, and that ye may live long in the inheritance which the Lord giveth you upon earth.

Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is the One Eternal Being. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command you this day shall be in thy heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt speak of them, when thou sittest in thy house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thy eyes; and thou shalt write

them upon the door-posts of thy houses, and upon thy gates.

When one day thy son should ask thee, saying, What mean the testimonies, the statutes, and the laws, which the Lord your God hath commanded you? thou shalt reply unto thy son, We were servants unto Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Lord delivered us thence with an outstretched arm and a mighty hand. The Lord also showed signs and great and evil miracles on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his house, in our presence; and us He brought out therefrom to bring us hither, and to give us the land which He had sworn unto our fathers. And the Lord commanded us therefore to keep all these statutes, and to fear Him, the Lord our God, that it may be always well with us. It will be also righteousness in us, if we observe to do, before the Lord our God, all this commandment, as He hath commanded us. But take heed lest thou forget the Lord thy God, and observe not his commandments, his statutes, and his laws, which I declare unto thee this day. When thou livest in plenty, and buildest and inhabitest fine houses, and hast flocks and herds in abundance, and plenty of gold and silver, and thy prosperity is continually increasing, it then might happen that thy heart would become vain, and thou forget the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage,—who hath guided thee across this immense and terrible desert, where there are venomous serpents and scorpions,—across this arid wilderness, where there is no water, and where the Lord brought out water for thee from the hard rock,—where He hath fed thee with manna, which thy

fathers knew not, to prove thee in adversity, and to do thee good at thy latter end. Thou mightest say in thy heart, My strength and the might of my hand have procured me all these riches; but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for He doth give thee the power to acquire these riches, to fulfil his covenant which He swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day. And now, O Israel! what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear Him, to walk in His ways, to love Him and to serve Him, by keeping the commandments of the Lord thy God, for thy own happiness. For the Eternal your God is the God of gods, the Lord of lords; He is the Mighty, Powerful, and Terrible God, who hath not respect unto persons, and who cannot be corrupted by gifts; who doth justice to the orphan and the widow, who loveth the stranger, and giveth him food and raiment; love ye then the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

If there be a poor among thy brethren, harden not thy heart, and shut not thy hand against thy unfortunate brother. But open thou thy hand, and lend him what he needeth, all of which he standeth in want. Beware that an evil thought enter not into thy heart, and say, Lo! the seventh year, the year of release, draweth nigh;* and thy eye be evil unto thy poor brother, and thou give him naught. He might then cry unto the Lord, and thou wilt have defiled thyself with sin. Thou shalt not fail to aid him, nor shall thy heart regret thy having given him; because for this end hath the Lord blessed

* The produce of every seventh year was given to the poor. It was called the Septennial Jubilee, or Sabbatical year.

thee in all thy works, and in all thy undertakings. As there will be poor in the land, have I ordered thee to be liberal unto thy indigent brother.

II. Commandments relative to Propriety, Justice, Truthfulness, Liberality, and Love to our Fellow-creatures, of whatever nation or creed.

"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us all? Wherefore, then, shall we act deceitfully one towards the other?"—*Malachi* ii. 10.

These are some of the precepts and laws which Moses, by command of the Lord, gave unto the children of Israel. When thou seest an ox or a sheep going astray, thou shalt not turn aside, but thou shalt bring it back unto its owner. If thy brother live too far from thee, or thou knowest not to whom the beast belongeth, thou shalt take it home, and keep it until thy brother make inquiry concerning it, and then shalt thou restore it to him. In like manner shalt thou act with his ass, his garment, or any thing which thy brother may have lost, and thou hast found. Thou shalt not in any case withdraw thyself from acting in this manner. If thou seest thy brother's ass or his ox fallen in the road, thou shalt not refrain from helping thy brother to raise it. When thou buildest a new house, thou shalt make a parapet around the roof, so that thy house may not occasion death, should any one fall therefrom.

When thou shalt have lent any thing unto thy neighbour, thou shalt not go into his house to receive his

pledge. Thou shalt stand without, and he shall bring out the pledge to thee without the house. If this man be poor, thou shalt not lie down to rest with his pledge in thy possession; but thou shalt return it to him at the setting of the sun, that he may lie down under his covering, and may bless thee; and it shall be reckoned unto thee as righteousness before the Lord thy God. Keep not back the wages of the poor and indigent hireling, whether he be of thy brethren or a stranger. Thou shalt give him his wages on the same day that he hath earned them, before the setting of the sun; for he is poor, and needs his wages; that he cry not unto the Lord against thee, and it be reckoned as sin against thee. Act not unjustly toward the stranger, and take not to pledge the garment of the widow. When thou gatherest in thy harvest in the field, and thou hast forgotten a sheaf, thou shalt not return back to gather it; but shalt leave it for the stranger, the widow, and the orphan, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all thy works. When thou gatherest thy vintage, thou shalt not glean the grapes which may have remained on the vine; but leave them for the stranger, the widow, and the orphan. Remember thou wast a slave in Egypt; therefore have I commanded thee to do this.

Reject not the Edomite, for he is thy brother; nor reject the Egyptian, for thou wast a stranger in his land.

When thou hast made a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not delay fulfilling it; for the Lord thy God will require it from thee, and it would be accounted sinful in thee. Nevertheless, if thou abstain from vowing, there

shall be no sin. But thou shalt perform faithfully what thy lips have once promised to the Lord; thou shalt fulfil every vow which thy mouth hath voluntarily made.

You shalt make fringes (tzitzit) on the four corners of your garments, and you* shall affix thereto a thread of blue (*purple*). Ye shall look upon them and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them. And ye shall not follow the inclinations of your hearts and of your eyes, which lead you astray. Ye shall remember all my commandments; ye shall do them, and be holy unto the Lord your God.

III. The Blessings and Curses.

"Come, ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man that desireth to live, and hopeth to see happy days? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from uttering deceit. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."—*Psalms* xxxiv. 12–15.

Moses exhorted farther the Israelites and said, Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: the blessing if ye obey the commands of the Lord your God, which I command you this day; and the curse, if ye obey not the commandments of the Lord your God, and if ye turn from the way which I command you to follow. And when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which thou art going to conquer, thou shalt pronounce the blessings on Mount Gerizzim, and the curses

* This is taken from Numbers.

on Mount Ebal. When ye shall have passed the Jordan, the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin shall stand on Mount Gerizzim to bless the people; and those of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulon, Dan, and Naphtali, on Mount Ebal to pronounce the curse. Then the Levites shall commence, and say in a loud voice to all the people of Israel, Cursed be he that maketh a molten or graven image, and putteth it in a secret place (*to worship it*); and all the people shall answer, and say, So be it! Amen. Cursed be he who despiseth his father or mother; and all the people shall say, Amen! Cursed be he who removeth the land-marks of his neighbour; and all the people shall say, Amen! Cursed be he who maketh the blind to wander out of the way; and all the people shall say, Amen! Cursed be he who perverteth the judgment of the stranger, the widow and the orphan; and all the people shall say, Amen! Cursed be he who smiteth his neighbour secretly; and all the people shall say, Amen! Cursed be he who receiveth a bribe to condemn the innocent; and all the people shall say, Amen! Cursed be he who confirmeth not the words of this law, to keep them; and all the people shall say, Amen!*

Now behold, (O Israel!) I lay before thee this day life and the good, death and the evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, to observe His Commandments, His laws, and His statutes, that thou mayst live and multiply; and that the Lord may bless thee. But if thy heart turn aside, and

* For the other denunciations, see Deut. xxvii.

thou obey not, then I announce to you, this day, that ye shall perish, and shall not dwell long in the land ye are about to conquer on the other side of the Jordan. I call heaven and earth to witness against you, this day, that I have set before thee life and death, blessing and the curse. Choose life, that thou mayest be preserved, thou and thy posterity. Love the Lord thy God, obey His voice, and cleave unto Him; for therein is thy preservation and thy length of days.

IV. The Lord directs Moses to prepare for death, and to appoint Joshua as his successor. Moses recommends the Israelites to confide in the Lord, and to obey His laws.

"Israel! confide in the Lord, He is thy help and thy shield. Ye who fear the Lord trust in Him, He is your help and your shield."—*Psalm* cxv. 9, 11.

And the Lord spoke unto Moses, and said unto him, Get thee up into Mount Abarim, and behold from there the land which I give unto the children of Israel; and when thou shalt have seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people as thy brother Aaron was gathered; because you disobeyed my command in the wilderness of Sin, at the waters of Meribah at Kadesh, and did not sanctify me in the sight of the children of Israel. Then Moses said unto the Lord, May the Lord of all spirits, of all flesh, deign to put at the head of this Congregation a man that may go out and come in before them, (that is, *one who may guide and direct them*); so that the as-

sembly of the Lord be not as a flock without a shepherd. And the Lord said unto Moses, Take Joshua, the son of Nun, he is a man in whom is the true spirit, and lay thy hand upon him. Then shalt thou present him unto the priest Elazar, and to all the people, and thou shalt give him instructions in their presence. Bestow upon him a portion of thy authority, that all the assembly of the people of Israel may obey him. And Moses did as the Lord had commanded him; and he presented Joshua unto Elazar and all the people; he also laid his hands upon him, and gave him instructions, as the Lord had commanded him.*

Then Moses delivered the following address unto all Israel, and said unto them, This day am I one hundred and twenty years old: I can no longer lead you forth, and the Lord hath said unto me, Thou shalt not pass over this Jordan. Be strong and courageous; fear not, and be not dismayed of the nations whom ye shall meet; for the Lord your God goeth before you; He will not forsake you; nor will He leave you. Then he called Joshua, and said unto him in the presence of all Israel, Be strong and of courage; for thou wilt enter with this people into the land which the Lord swore unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt establish them therein. The Lord will be with thee; He will aid thee and will not forsake thee, nor leave thee; fear not then, but be bold!

Moses wrote all this law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, who bore the ark of the cove-

* This is also from Numbers.

nant of the Lord, and unto all the elders. Moses commanded them at the same time saying, When all Israel shall come to appear before the face of the Lord their God, in the place which He shall choose: then shalt thou read this law aloud, in the presence of all Israel; thou shalt assemble there all the people, men, women, and children, and even the stranger who sojourneth in thy gates, that all may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; and that their children, who are yet unacquainted, may hear it and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live upon this land. Moses then pronounced before all the assembly, the words of a sublime song, in which he predicted the future destinies of the sons of Jacob; and gave his blessing to each of the tribes of Israel.

V. Death of Moses. Joshua succeeds him in his divine mission.

"The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: their inheritance shall exist for ever.—*Psalm* xxxvii. 18.

On this same day the Lord said unto Moses, Go up nto the mountain of Abarim, on Mount Nebo, which is n the country of Moab, opposite Jericho. On that nount shalt thou die and be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother died on Mount Hor, and was gathered nto his people. And Moses went up to the Mount Nebo, on the top of Pisgah, and the Lord showed him ll the land, from Gilead unto Dan; and he said unto im, This is the land, of which I swore unto Abraham, nto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, Unto thy descen-

dants will I give it. Thou shalt see it with thy eyes, but thou shalt not enter therein. Then Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the command of the Lord; and he buried him in the valley in the land opposite Beth-peor; and no one knoweth of his burial-place even unto this day.

The children of Israel mourned for Moses in the plain of Moab during thirty days.

Now Joshua, the son of Nun, was filled with the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him, and the children of Israel obeyed him, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses. Nevertheless, there never arose a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, to whom the Lord manifested himself face to face; with all the signs, and wonders which the Lord caused him to do in Egypt, against Pharaoh, and against his servants and all his country: with the great power and great fearful deeds, which Moses did before the eyes of all Israel.

END OF THE PENTATEUCH.

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

כפר יהושע

I. GOD COMMANDS JOSHUA TO PASS OVER THE RIVER JORDAN, AND PROMISES TO ASSIST HIM.

A. M. 2489.

"The secret of the Lord is with those who fear Him; and He will make known his covenant unto them."—PSALM XXV. 14.

AFTER Moses, the servant of God, was dead, the Lord spoke unto Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, and said unto him: Moses my servant is dead; arise now, pass this Jordan, and enter into the land which I give unto the children of Israel. Every place on which the sole of your foot shall rest, do I give unto you, as I have spoken unto Moses. No one shall be able to stand before thee, as long as thou livest; I will be with thee as I was with Moses; I will neither withdraw my hand from thee, nor will I ever forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt place this people in possession of the land which I have sworn unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which my servant Moses commanded thee;

turn not unto the right or to the left, that thou mayst prosper whithersoever thou goest. Let not this book of the law depart from thy mouth; but meditate therein day and night, so that thou mayst observe to do according to all that is written therein, for then shalt thou be prosperous in thy ways, and then shalt thou have good success. Behold, I have commanded thee to be strong and of a good courage; be not cast down, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, Go through the camp, and command the people to provide themselves with provisions; for in three days ye shall pass over the Jordan to occupy the land which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it. He then said unto the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Menasseh, Remember what Moses the servant of God hath commanded you, saying, You may, since you desire it, establish yourselves in this land on this side Jordan; but all your able-bodied men must take up arms before your brethren to render them assistance, whilst your wives, your children, and your cattle will remain on this side of the river, until the Lord shall have given to them rest as He hath unto you, and they also have obtained possession of the land which He hath given them. And they answered to Joshua: We will do all that thou commandest us, and will go wherever thou wilt send us; we will obey thee, as we obeyed Moses; only may the Lord be with thee as He was with Moses! whosoever it be that doth rebel against thy voice, and will not obey all that thou commandest, shall be put to death! But be strong and of a good courage.

II. TWO SPIES ARE SENT BY JOSHUA TO RECONNOITRE THE ENVIRONS OF JERICHO.

"Happy is he who hath the God of Jacob for his help."—PSALM cxlvi. 5.

JOSHUA thereupon sent secretly from Shittim two men, to whom he said, Go, explore the country, and especially the city of Jericho. They then departed and entered into an inn kept by a woman named Rachab. But it was reported to the king of Jericho that some Israelites had arrived there during the night to spy out the land; and the king sent immediately to Rachab, saying, Deliver up the men who have come to lodge with thee; for in order to spy out all the land have they come. But the woman, who had taken these two men and concealed them, replied, Two men certainly did arrive here, but I knew not whence they were; and as they were shutting the gate of the town, when it was night, they went out, and I know not whither they are gone. Pursue quickly after them, for you may still overtake them.

Nevertheless she had led the two men up to the roof of the house, and had hidden them under the stalks of flax which she had spread out on the roof. After they who had come in search of the two men had gone out of the city, and the gate was shut, Rachab ascended to the roof and said to them, I know that the Lord hath given this land unto you, for already terror hath seized on us, and all the inhabitants tremble before you. We have learnt that the Lord dried up the waters of the Red Sea before you when ye came out of Egypt, and that ye

have destroyed the two kings Sichon and Og. And we have thus lost all courage before you; for the Lord your God is the God of heaven and earth. Now that I have acted kindly towards you, swear unto me by the Lord that ye will also show kindness towards my family, and give me a certain sign that ye will save the life of my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and all belonging to them. The men replied, We pledge thee for your lives by our own, provided you betray not this our business. And when the Lord shall have delivered this land into our hands, we will show thee kindness and truth. She then made them descend by a cord from the window; for her house was built in the very wall of the town, so that she dwelt in the wall. And the men said unto her, Fix a scarlet thread to this window, and assemble in thy house all that is thine, so that whoever goeth out of the door of thy house, will be himself the cause of his own death, and we shall be innocent thereof; but the blood of any one who remaineth in thy house shall be upon our heads, if any one put hands on him. She then replied, Let it be as ye have said; and she affixed a scarlet thread to the window. Having waited three days in the mountains, until those who had gone in pursuit of them had come back, they returned unto Joshua, and related to him all that had happened. And they said unto Joshua, Certainly the Lord hath delivered all this land into our hands; for already do all the inhabitants thereof tremble before us.

III. PASSAGE OF THE JORDAN.

"Thou, O Lord, didst clean springs and the streams; thou driest up mighty rivers."—PSALM lxxiv. 15.

JOSHUA and all the children of Israel departed from Shittim and advanced to the bank of the Jordan, and they tarried there before passing over. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and listen to the words of the Lord your God. Hereby shall ye know that the Living God is in the midst of you, and that he will, without fail, drive out before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites:—behold! as soon as the priests, who bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall place their feet on the waters of the Jordan, the stream shall cease to flow, and the waters shall gather together and stand up as a wall. When the people removed from their tents to pass the Jordan, the priests who bore the ark of the covenant, walked before the people unto the bank of the Jordan. And as soon as the former had placed their feet on the stream, (and the Jordan had overflowed its banks, as was usual at harvest time,) the waters rose up as a wall, and the lower part flowing into the Salt Sea, was cut off and was entirely lost: and the people then passed over on dry ground, opposite Jericho. But the priests remained on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, until all the people had passed over. Joshua then commanded the children of Israel to bring from the middle of Jordan twelve stones, according to the number

of the tribes of Israel; and they did as Joshua had commanded them.

The people having passed over the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, encamped at Gilgal, to the east of Jericho. Here Joshua set up the twelve stones which they had brought from the midst of the Jordan, and he said to the children of Israel, When your children shall ask in after days, What signify these stones? then shall ye let them know, saying, That the Lord your God, had dried before you the waters of the Jordan until ye had passed over, just as he had done to the Red Sea which he dried up before us, that we might pass over on dry land, when we came forth from Egypt, to the end that all the people of the earth might know the power of the Lord, that it is mighty, and that ye may fear the Lord your God for ever.

At this time the Lord commanded Joshua to circumcise the children of Israel a second time, since those that were born in the desert had not been circumcised; and Joshua fulfilled the command of the Lord. While the children of Israel were encamped in Gilgal, they celebrated the passover on the fourteenth day of the month towards evening, in the plain of Jericho; and from the next day they ate of the corn of the land, unleavened bread, and parched corn. The manna ceased henceforth, and they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan.

IV. THE CAPTURE OF JERICHO.

"The horse is prepared for the day of battle; but victory cometh from the Lord."—PROV. xxi. 31.

WHILST Joshua was encamped before Jericho, he perceived opposite to him a man with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua drew near unto him, and said, Art thou on our side or on that of our enemy's? But he replied: No; I am a chief of the army of the Lord, and have but just come. Joshua prostrated himself and said, What doth my lord command unto his servant? And the chief of the hosts of the Lord said unto Joshua, Take off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place on which thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

Now Jericho was kept carefully shut against the children of Israel; none went out and none came in. But the Lord said unto Joshua, Behold, I deliver into thy hands Jericho and its king, also the valiant men of his army. And according to the command of the Lord, Joshua caused the priests to make a circuit round the town every day, amidst the blowing of cornets, whilst the armed men walked before, and the priests that bore the ark followed them, and the rereward went after the ark. But on the seventh day he caused them to make seven circuits. And he said to the people, The city with all it contains, shall be placed under the ban of the Lord. Rachab only shall be spared, and all those who shall be with her in her house; because she carefully concealed the spies whom we had sent. Be especially

careful to take nothing of the accursed things, or ye will place the camp of Israel under a curse and cause it to be troubled. But all the silver and gold, vessels of copper and iron, shall be consecrated to the Lord; they shall be brought to the treasury of the Lord. And now said Joshua to the people, Shout! for the Lord hath given you the city. So the people shouted, whilst the priests blew the cornets, and at the same moment the walls immediately fell inwards; the people entered the city and took possession thereof. All that the city contained was declared accursed; men, women, young and old, and even the animals, all were put to the sword. But Joshua said to the men who had spied out the country, Go into the house of Rachab, and bring out Rachab and all that are with her, as ye have sworn unto her. The two men then went into the house of Rachab, and brought her out from it, and her father, mother, brothers, and all her family, and conducted them without the camp of Israel. Then the Israelites burnt the city; but the gold and silver, vessels of copper and of iron were placed in the treasury of the house of the Lord, as Joshua had ordered. And the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame was spread throughout all the country.

V. CRIME AND PUNISHMENT OF ACHAN.

"The avaricious man causes the ruin of his house."—PROV. xv. 27.

"Heaven revealeth his iniquity and the earth riseth up against him."—JOB xx. 27.

NEVERTHELESS the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing; for Achan, the son of

Carmi of the tribe of Judah took away some of the accursed things; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. Joshua, having sent about three thousand men against the City of Aï, they were repulsed, and lost about thirty-six men. The people were so dismayed at this defeat, that their courage failed them entirely. Then Joshua rent his garments, and threw himself with his face on the ground, before the ark of the Lord, he and the elders of Israel, and they threw ashes on their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, Lord God! wherefore hast Thou caused this people to pass over the Jordan, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? Oh, Lord! what shall I say after having seen Israel turn their back on their enemies? And the Lord said unto Joshua, Rise up! wherefore dost thou lie on thy face? Israel hath sinned, and hath broken the covenant which I commanded them to observe; for they have taken of the accursed things; they have also stolen, and also dissembled, and have hidden it in their vessels. Wherefore they will not be able to stand up before their enemies; they will turn their back upon them, for they have themselves fallen under the curse. I will no more be with them, unless ye extirpate the accursed thing from among you. Go, notify the people to present themselves to-morrow before the ark of the Lord, according to their tribes and their families. He whom the Lord shall retain, and on whom the accursed thing shall be found, shall be burnt with all that appertaineth unto him. The next morning, therefore, Joshua caused the people to appear before the ark of the Lord, and the tribe of Judah was taken. He then caused the

families of Judah to approach, and the family of Zerach was taken; then causing the members of this family to approach, Zabdi was taken; finally, he caused the individuals of the house of Zabdi to draw nigh, and at last Achan was taken. Joshua then said unto him, My son, I pray thee, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, make confession before him and declare to me what thou hast done; hide nothing from me. And Achan replied unto Joshua, It is true, I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel; this is what I have done: I saw among the booty a magnificent Babylonian mantle, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels; I coveted them, and I took them, and behold, they are concealed in the midst of my tent. Joshua immediately sent messengers, who ran to the tent, and there found all that Achan had spoken of. Then Joshua took Achan, his sons, his daughters, his cattle and his tent, as well as the stolen articles, and conducted them into a valley. Arrived there, Joshua said, As thou hast afflicted us, so shall the Lord trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him. The rest were burnt after they had been stoned. They heaped over him a great pile of stones. Then the anger of the Lord was appeased. It is for this cause that this place beareth the name of the Valley of Achor (Valley of Affliction), even until this day.

VI. JOSHUA EXECUTES THE ORDERS OF MOSES.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, quieting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making the simple wise."—PSALM xix. 8.

AFTER having conquered the city of Ai, which they reduced to ashes, Joshua built an altar on Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded him; and as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, this altar was of whole stones, on which no tool had been used. There they offered burnt offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings. He wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, their elders, officers and judges, ranged themselves on each side of the Ark, opposite the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, the stranger as well as the Israelite; one half turned towards Mount Gerizzim, and the other half towards Mount Ebal, to bless the children of Israel, as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded him. Joshua then read aloud all the words of the law, the blessings and the curses, according to all that is written in the book of the law. Not one word of all that Moses had commanded, did Joshua omit to read before the whole congregation of Israel,—before the women, the children, and the strangers that were dwelling among them.

VII. CRAFTINESS OF THE GIBEONITES.

"Lying lips are an abomination unto the Lord; but those who deal truly are his delight."—PROV. xii. 22.

THE inhabitants of Gibeon having learnt how Joshua had treated Jericho and Aï, had recourse to a cunning device: some among them proceeded on their way, passing themselves for ambassadors; they loaded their asses with old sacks and old wine bottles, which were rent and mended; their feet were covered with sandals which were worn out and patched; they also put on worn-out clothes, and their bread was dry and mouldy. In this condition they arrived before Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, and being asked, who they were? they said to him and to all Israel, We, thy servants, have arrived from a very far distant country, in honour of the Lord thy God, whose fame hath reached even unto us. For we have learnt all that He did for you in Egypt, and to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the Jordan. So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said unto us, Take with you provisions for the journey and go to meet them and say to them, We are your servants, therefore now make a treaty of alliance with us. This our bread was yet hot when we took it as provision from our houses on the day when we departed to come to you, but now, behold, it is dry and mouldy; and these wine bottles were new when we filled them, and now, behold, they are cracked; these our garments and our shoes are worn out by the very great length of our journey. Some of the men (of Israel) then partook of

their provisions without consulting the Lord, and Joshua made peace with them, and made a treaty of alliance with them, *by which he assured them to preserve them alive*, and the heads of the congregation swore the same unto them. But three days after the conclusion of this treaty, Joshua found that they were near inhabitants; for in three days the Israelites arrived in their towns, to wit, Gibeon, Kephira, Beëroth, and Kiryath-Yeärim. Then Joshua and the chiefs of Israel said unto the people, We have sworn unto them by the Lord, the God of Israel: we cannot then touch them. Let them live, lest the Divine anger be kindled against us on account of the oath which we have sworn unto them; but we will make them hewers of wood and drawers of water for all the congregation of Israel. Joshua acted towards them as the chiefs had decided; he made them from that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the whole congregation, and for the altar of the Lord, in the place which the Lord might choose.

VIII. DEFEAT OF THE FIVE AMORITISH KINGS—CONQUEST AND PARTITION OF THE COUNTRY.

"They shall be confounded, all those who serve graven images, and boast themselves of idols; all the gods shall prostrate themselves before Him."—PSALM xcvii. 7.

WHEN the kings of the country heard that Joshua had taken Jericho and Aï, and had destroyed them, and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, they were seized with terror; for Gibeon was a very great city, and all its men were men of valour. Five

Amoritish kings then formed a league, and united their armies and attacked the Gibeonites. But the inhabitants of Gibeon sent unto Joshua, saying, Refuse us not thy aid, come quickly to our assistance against the Amoritish kings who inhabit the mountain and are assembled against us. Joshua set out from Gilgal with all his army, and with all the men of valour. And the Lord said to Joshua, Fear them not, for I have delivered them into thy hands, not one man of them shall be able to stand before thee. Joshua then marched all night, and fell upon them suddenly; and the Lord discomfited them before Israel, who made a great slaughter among them near Gibeon, and pursued them on the road which leadeth upward to Bethhoron, and smote them to Azekah and unto Makedah. Whilst they were fleeing before Israel, the Lord showered down from heaven enormous hailstones, which destroyed more than the Israelites had slain with the sword. On the day of the victory of the children of Israel over the Amorites, Joshua speaking before the Lord, exclaimed in the presence of Israel, Stand still, O sun, on Gibeon, and thou, O moon, on the valley of Ajalon! And the sun and the moon stood still until the people had taken vengeance on their enemies. Thus Joshua overcame the kings of the Amorites; he conquered their cities, and smote them with the edge of the sword. All Israel then returned to the camp at Gilgal.

In like manner did Joshua conquer thirty-one kings, and take possession of their lands. Thus he conquered all the country, as the Lord had said unto Moses, and he gave it as a possession to the children of Israel after having divided it according to their tribes. The tribes

of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Menasseh, had their possessions on the east side of Jordan, which Moses had granted to them. As to the tribe of Levi, consecrated to the service of the Lord, they obtained a portion of the towns of each tribe. The Levitical cities were forty-eight, of which thirteen, drawn by lot in the tribes of Judah, Simeon and Benjamin, fell to the priests, the children of Aaron. The Israelites also established cities of refuge, to wit, Kedesh in Galilee, on the mountains of Nephtali, Shechem, on the mountain of Ephraim, and Kiryath-Arba or Hebron, on the mountain of Judah; and on the other side of Jordan, Betzer, in the desert, in a plain, of the tribe of Reuben; Ramoth, in Gilead, of the tribe of Gad; and Golan, in Bashan, of the tribe of Menasseh. Thus the Israelites observed, in the partition of the land, all that the Lord had commanded Moses.

IX. EXHORTATION OF JOSHUA TO THE ISRAELITES ESTABLISHED TO THE EAST OF JORDAN—DISPUTE OCCASIONED BY THE ALTAR WHICH THESE ERECTED ON THE BORDERS OF THE JORDAN.

"If they obey and serve the Lord, their days shall glide along in prosperity, and their years in pleasures."—JOB xxxvi. 11.

"Shall God not inquire thereof, He, who knoweth the secrets of the heart?"—PSALM xliv. 22.

AND Joshua called the tribes of Reuben, of Gad, and the half-tribe of Menasseh, and said unto them, Ye have obeyed all that Moses, the servant of the Lord, commanded you; ye have also listened to my voice in all that I commanded you. Ye have not abandoned your

brethren to this day, and have faithfully observed the commandments of the Lord your God. Now that the Lord your God hath given rest unto your brethren as He hath promised them, return ye into the country of your inheritance, which Moses, the servant of the Lord your God, gave unto you, on the other side of the Jordan. But take ye heed to keep the law and observe the precepts which Moses, the servant of the Lord, ordered you: to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways, to obey His commandments, to remain faithfully attached to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul. And Joshua blessed them and sent them away; and they set out to return unto their tents.

When they had arrived at the borders of the Jordan, they built there a great altar near the stream. When the children of Israel heard it, they assembled to go up against them to war. But they sent before them Phinehas, son of Elazar, the priest, and a prince of each of the ten tribes. And when they arrived at the place where the children of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Menasseh were, in the country of Gilead, they said to them, Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord, What meaneth this trespass which ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the Lord, in that ye have built yourselves an altar, that ye might rebel against the Lord? Is there not enough of the sin of Peor, from which we are not purified even to this day, although it brought such a mortality on the congregation of the Lord, but that ye must turn away this day from following the Lord? And

if ye rebel this day against the Lord, to-morrow He will be angry against the whole congregation of Israel. Notwithstanding if the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over into the land of the possession of the Lord, where the tabernacle of the Lord is erected; but rebel not against the Lord, nor rebel against us in building an altar beside the altar of the Lord our God. But the sons of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Menasseh replied, The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel also shall know it! if we have acted in a spirit of rebellion or trespass against Thee, O Lord! assist us not this day, if we have built ourselves an altar to turn away from following the Lord, and if it be to sacrifice thereon burnt and meat-offerings, or to prepare thereon peace-offerings, may the Lord himself require it. But, on the contrary, we have rather done this in the fear that your children should one day say unto ours, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel? Hath not the Lord placed the Jordan as a boundary between you and us? Ye have no portion in the Lord. And thus your children might prevent our children from worshipping the Lord. Wherefore we said, Let us do this for us, to build this altar, not for burnt offerings nor for other sacrifices, but that it may serve as a testimony between us and you, and between our descendants after us, that we also may practise the worship of the Lord with our burnt-offerings and our sacrifices, and our peace-offerings, and that your descendants may not say one day to our children, Ye have no portion in the Lord. Therefore said we, It shall come to pass, when they should say this to us

and to our generations in time to come, that we may say in reply, Behold the pattern of the altar of the Lord which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you. Far be this thought from us, that we should rebel against the Lord, and to turn away this day from following the Lord, to build an altar for burnt and meat offerings, and for sacrifices, beside the altar of the Lord our God, which is before his dwelling. And when Phinehas, the priest, and the chiefs of the congregation, and the heads of the thousands of Israel who were with him heard these words, they were quite satisfied therewith. Then they returned unto the children of Israel, in the land of Canaan, and made report thereof to them. The thing pleased the children of Israel; they praised God, and spoke no more of going up to battle against the children of Reuben and Gad, and of ravaging the land in which they dwelt. The children of Reuben and Gad named this altar, Ed, Witness; for, said they, It shall be a witness between us that the Lord alone is the true God.

X. LAST ADDRESS OF JOSHUA TO THE ISRAELITES, AND DEATH OF JOSHUA.

A. M. 2516.

"Accept the instruction of his mouth, and retain his words in thy heart."—Job xxii. 22.

A long time after the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, Joshua convoked an assembly of all the tribes at Shechem, and called the elders, the chiefs, the judges, and the officers who pre-

sented themselves before God. Then Joshua spoke unto them saying, I am now old, and advanced in years, and ye have witnessed what the Lord your God hath done for your sakes to all these nations; for it is the Lord your God who hath fought for you. This land hath become your portion according to your tribes; and the Lord will yet drive from among you the nations which still remain, and you will possess their lands, as the Lord your God hath promised you. But be ye very firm to observe and perform all that is written in the book of the law of Moses; so as not to turn from it to the right or to the left; and so as not to mix yourselves with the nations which still remain with you, and make ye no mention of the name of their gods, and swear not by them, and serve them not, nor bow ye down to them. But remain ye firmly attached to the Lord your God, as ye have done unto this day. Behold, I am going this day the way of all flesh; and do you acknowledge with all your heart and with all your soul, that of all the promises which the Lord your God hath made in your favour, not one remaineth unaccomplished; all have been realized unto you. But in like manner as all the good things which the Lord your God promised concerning you have happened, so also will the Lord cause to come over you all kinds of misfortunes, until He shall have destroyed you from off this goodly land which he the Lord your God hath given you: if ye transgress the covenant of the Lord your God which He hath commanded you; and if ye go and serve other gods, and bow down to them, then will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you and ye will perish quickly

from off this goodly land which He hath given you. Then addressing himself to all the people, Joshua continued as follows, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Formerly your ancestors lived on the other side of the river, and served strange gods; and I took your ancestor Abraham from the other side of the river, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and I multiplied his posterity, and I gave unto him Isaac. I gave unto Isaac, Esau and Jacob; I also gave Esau in possession the mountain of Seir; but Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I smote Egypt with the miracles which I performed in the midst thereof, and then I brought you out therefrom. And when I had led your parents out of Egypt, and ye had come to the sea, the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen even unto the Red Sea. They then cried unto the Lord, and he caused darkness to spring up between you and the Egyptians, and brought back upon them the sea which covered them. Your eyes saw what I did unto the Egyptians, and you dwelt a long time in the desert. Then I brought you into the country of the Amorites, on the other side of the Jordan. These fought against you; but I delivered them into your hands, and ye conquered their lands, and I destroyed them before you. Then rose up Balak, the King of Moab, against you, and sent to call Bileäm to curse you. But I would not hearken unto Bileäm; he was forced to bless you; and thus I delivered you from his hand. You next passed over the Jordan and came unto Jericho; and the men of Jericho fought against you, as also the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the

Hivites, and the Jebusites, and I delivered them into your hands. And I sent the hornet before you, and it drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; this happened not with thy sword nor with thy bow. And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour; cities which ye had not built, and ye dwell in them; ye eat the fruits of the vineyards and the olive trees which ye planted not. Fear, then, the Lord, and serve Him with sincerity and truth; and put away from among you the *false gods*, which your ancestors served on the other side of the river and in Egypt, and serve the Lord alone. Nevertheless, if the worship of the Lord be displeasing in your sight, choose this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods which your ancestors served on the other side of the river or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord. And the people replied, Far be it from us to forsake the Lord to serve other gods! for it is the Lord our God who brought us up, us and our ancestors, out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage; and who hath done in our sight these great miracles, and hath preserved us in all the way on which we have gone, and amongst all the nations in the midst of whom we have passed. The Lord also drove out from before us all the people, even the Amorites who dwelt in this land. We will, therefore, serve only the Lord; for he is our God. And Joshua said unto the people, It will not be so easy for you to serve the Lord; for he is a holy God and a watchful God, who will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. For if ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, He will send evil upon you; and He will

make an end of you, even after having done you so much good. But the people answered Joshua, It will not happen thus, for the Lord will we serve. Then Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves this day, that ye have chosen the Lord to serve Him; and they said, We are witnesses. And now (he continued) put away the strange gods which are among you, and turn your hearts unto the Lord the God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. Joshua made the same day a covenant with the people, and gave them the laws and statutes at Shechem. He also wrote these words in the book of the law of God; then he took a great stone and set it up under an oak, which grew near the sanctuary of the Lord, and he said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be to us a witness, for it hath heard all the words which the Lord hath spoken unto us; and it shall therefore be a witness against you, that ye become not faithless unto your God. Then Joshua bid the people go each unto his inheritance.

After these events, Joshua, the son of Nun, died at the age of one hundred and ten years. They buried him on the borders of his inheritance at Timnath-Serach, in the mountain of Ephraim. The bones of Joseph, also, which the Israelites had brought with them from Egypt, were interred at Shechem, in that piece of ground which Jacob had bought from the sons of Chamor, the father of Shechem, and which fell to the lot of the sons of Joseph. Elazar, the son of Aaron, died also, and was buried on the hill which had been given to his son Phinehas, in the mount of Ephraim.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

כפר שופטים

I. THE JUDGES OTHNIEL AND EHUD.

A. M. 2533—2653.

"Let Israel hope in the Lord, for mercy is with the Lord, and abundant redemption is with Him. And He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities."—PSALM CXXX. 7, 8.

AFTER the death of Joshua, the people continued to serve the Lord during the life of the elders, who survived Joshua a long time, and who had seen all the great deeds which the Lord had performed for Israel. But when the elders, and all the men of that generation had been gathered unto their fathers, there arose after them a new generation who knew not the Lord nor the glorious wonders which he had performed for Israel. And then the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and they served idols. Thus they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them forth from the land of Egypt. They took likewise for wives the daughters of the nations among whom they dwelt, and gave their own daughters to their sons, by which they learnt to serve their false gods. Wherefore the Lord was incensed against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of their enemies, and the

Israelites experienced the most cruel calamities. They then implored the Lord, and God being merciful listened unto their prayer; and he raised them up judges, whom He inspired with courage and wisdom, and by them he delivered Israel from the power of their enemies.

But as soon as the judge for the time being was dead, the Israelites again relapsed into their wickedness, and they became more corrupt than their fathers had been, to go after strange gods, to serve them, and to bow down to them; they abandoned none of their wicked deeds, and of their abominable customs. As they had thus done evil in the sight of the Lord in the first age after the time of Joshua, by serving Baal and the groves (which were the idols of the Canaanites), the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the power of Cushan-Rishatayim, the king of Aram-Naharayim, otherwise called Mesopotamia, to whom they remained subject during eight years. Then the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, who raised them up as deliverer Othniel, the son of Kenaz, the younger brother of Caleb. And the spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel; he became a judge in Israel, and he delivered them from their enemies. For, animated with a divine courage, he went out to make war against Cushan, over whom the Lord caused him to obtain a complete victory. The country then enjoyed a peace for forty years. But when Othniel was dead the children of Israel began again to do evil in the sight of the Lord, who stirred up against them Eglon, the king of Moab. The latter having assembled together the children of Amalek and Ammon, overcame Israel, and

took possession of the city of palm trees (Jericho); and the children of Israel served the king of Moab during eighteen years. But the Israelites cried anew unto the Lord, who raised them up for a judge and deliverer Ehud the son of Gera, of the tribe of Benjamin. The children of Israel sent by him a present to Eglon, the king of Moab. Now Ehud, who was a left-handed man, had made himself a short sword with two edges, which he concealed under his garments. When he had presented the gift, he accompanied the persons who carried it some distance, but he again came back and drawing nigh unto the king, Eglon, he said unto him, I have a secret errand for thee, O king! The king immediately said, Let every one retire! and all who were present withdrew. Then Ehud approached him (and Eglon was seated in his summer pavilion) and said unto him, I have a message from God for thee. The king then rose from his seat, but Ehud drawing his sword with his left hand, plunged it into his abdomen even unto the hilt; he then left the room and locked the door. The servants finding the door shut, thought the king had locked himself in; but after having waited a long time for him to open the doors of his apartments, they took the key, opened them, and found their master lying dead on the floor. But Ehud, who had thus had time to escape, arrived in the mountain of Ephraim, where he blew the cornet, and the children of Israel immediately assembled around him; he put himself at their head, saying, Follow me, for the Lord hath delivered your enemies, the Moabites, into your hands. They descended after him, and took possession of the fordable passes of the Jordan,

suffered none to pass them, and slew ten thousand Moabites, all robust and men of valour. Not one of them escaped. On that day Moab became subdued under the power of Israel, and the country enjoyed peace during eighty years. Shamgar, the son of Anath, was Judge after him. He beat the Philistines, and he himself slew six hundred men with an ox-goad; and he also delivered Israel.

II. THE PROPHETESS DEBORAH JUDGE IN ISRAEL—BARAK, GENERAL OF THE ISRAELITES, DEFEATS SISERA, CHIEF OF THE ARMY OF JABIN.

A. M. 2654—2694.

"He delighteth not in the strength of the horse, neither taketh he pleasure in the swiftness of man; but the Lord taketh pleasure in those that fear him, in those that hope in His mercy."—PSALM cxlvii. 10, 11.

AFTER the death of Ehud the children of Israel again displeased the Lord by their acts, and the Lord delivered them into the power of Jabin, one of the Canaanitish kings, who reigned over Chatzor, and whose army was commanded by Sisera. The children of Israel implored the Lord, for Jabin had nine hundred chariots of iron, and he cruelly oppressed the children of Israel during twenty years. Deborah the prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was at this time the Judge of Israel. She dwelt under a palm-tree between Ramah and Beth-El, on the mount of Ephraim; and the Israelites came up to her for judgment. She now sent to call Barak, the son of Abinoäm, of Kadesch-Naphtali, and said to him, This hath

the Lord the God of Israel commanded, saying, Go, and draw in towards Mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun; and I will incite Sisera, the chief of the army of Jabin, to advance before thee towards the river of Kishon with his army and his chariots, and I will deliver him into thy hands. Barak, however, replied to her, If thou wilt go with me, I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, I will not go. And she said, I will go with thee; nevertheless thou shalt not acquire glory in the campaign which thou undertakest; for into the hands of a woman will the Lord deliver Sisera. Deborah then arose and went to Kadesch with Barak. Having called together Zebulun and Naphtali, he raised and took with him ten thousand men, and Deborah went forth with him. Sisera being told that Barak had gone up on the Mount Tabor, immediately gathered together all his army and his chariots, and proceeded towards the river Kishon. Then Deborah said unto Barak, Arise, for this is the day on which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thy hand. Is not the Lord gone out before thee? So Barak descended immediately from Mount Tabor with his ten thousand men. And the Lord discomfited Sisera, his chariots and his army, and they fell under the sword of Barak. Sisera himself descended from his chariot and fled on foot. Barak pursued the chariots and the army, and all perished by the sword, so that not one escaped. Now Sisera had fled on foot towards the tent of Jaël, wife of Heber, the Kenite (one of the sons of the father-in-law of Moses); for Jabin was at peace with the house of Heber. Jaël advanced towards

Sisera, and said, Come in, my lord, turn in to me, fear not. So he entered into her tent, and she covered him with a mantle. Then he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water, for I am thirsty; but she opened a bottle of milk, gave it to him and covered him up. Then he said, Place thyself at the entrance of the tent, and if any one cometh and asketh thee, Is there any man here? then shalt thou tell him, There is no one. But as soon as he was sound asleep, Jaël took one of the nails of the tent and a hammer, and approaching him softly without any noise, she drove the nail into his temple, and he died. Jaël then went out to meet Barak, who was pursuing Sisera, and said to him, Come, I will show thee the man whom thou seekest. He went in and saw Sisera lying dead, and the nail still in his temple. Thus did God humble that day Jabin the King of Canaan before the children of Israel. Then Deborah and Barak sang a song in honour of the Lord. The power of the children of Israel extended itself and became more and more prevalent over Jabin, the King of Canaan, until they had utterly destroyed them. The land then enjoyed peace for forty years.

III. GIDEON.

A. M. 2694—2734.

"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses."—PSALM cvii. 19.

DURING this peace of forty years, the Israelites again did evil in the sight of the Lord, and He delivered them into the hands of the Midianites, whose yoke pressed so heavily upon them, that they were obliged to conceal

themselves in grottos and caverns which they dug in the mountains. And it came to pass that when the Israelites had sown, Midian Amelek, and other people of the East, came and attacked them, and they destroyed all the products of the land, and left them no substance, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass; for their enemies came with their cattle and their tents; they came like grasshoppers in multitude and ravaged the land. Being thus impoverished by Midian, the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.

Now it happened one day as Gideon (Gid'one) the son of Joash, of the family of Abiezer, was threshing some wheat in a wine-press, to hide it from the Midianites, that an angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. But Gideon said unto him, O my lord, If the Lord be with us, why then hath all this befallen us? and where are all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Lo! he hath brought us up from Egypt; and now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the power of Midian? But the Lord turned to him and said, Go, in this thy might, and deliver Israel from the hands of the Midianites. Behold! I have sent thee! But Gideon replied, I pray thee, my Lord, how can I deliver Israel? my family is the weakest in Menasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house. And the Lord said unto him, I will be with thee, and thou shalt beat the Midianites as if they were but one man. Gideon then replied, If I have found grace in thy sight, show me by a sign* that thou speakest unto me in the

* When the angel had told him in the name of the Lord, "I

name of the Lord. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come to thee and bring and place before thee my offering. Then Gideon hastened and prepared a kid and unleavened bread, which he presented to the angel, and placed them afterwards, by his direction, on a rock. And the angel of the Lord, with the end of the staff which he held in his hand, touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and immediately there arose from the rock a fire which consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes; when the angel disappeared from his sight. Then Gideon knew that he was an angel of the Lord, and he exclaimed, O God the Lord! surely I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face; but the Lord said to him, Peace be unto thee, fear not—thou shalt not die; and Gideon built on the spot an altar which he named, THE LORD IS PEACE. The same night the Lord said unto him, Throw down the altar of Baal which belongeth to thy father, and cut down the grove which is by it. And thou shalt afterwards build an altar to the Lord thy God on the flat top of this rock, and thou shalt there offer a bullock as a burnt-offering with the wood of the grove which thou shalt have cut down. Gideon, therefore, took ten of his servants, and did as the Lord had commanded him; but as he was afraid to do it during the day on account of his family and the people of the city, he did it during the night.

will be with thee," Gideon said to him, "If it be indeed so, that thou art a prophet of God, and comest with his message, give me a token that thou speakest with me in the name of the Lord." And the token which he gave, was the fire which came from the rock.—KIMCHI.

In the morning, the people of the city saw that the altar of Baal was broken down; they made inquiry concerning the one who had done this, and they said at last, It is Gideon, the son of Joash, who hath done this. And they said to Joash, Deliver up thy son that he may die; for he hath destroyed the altar of Baal, and he hath cut down the grove which was near it. But Joash replied to all who stood near him, What! will you contend for Baal? or do ye wish to help him? If he be a god, let him contend for himself, (let him revenge himself of him,) who hath thrown down his altar. They therefore gave Gideon the by-name of Jerubbaal,* meaning, Let Baal revenge himself on him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

IV. THE VICTORY OF GIDEON.

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to place confidence in man."—PSALM cxviii. 8.

THE Midianites, the Amalekites, and the children of the East, having assembled, passed over the Jordan, and encamped in the valley of Jezreël. But Gideon, animated with a divine spirit, caused the cornet to be sounded, and the family of Abiezer assembled unto him. He likewise sent messengers throughout all the tribe of Menasseh, who also met together to follow him. He convoked in like manner the tribes of Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they came up to meet him. Gideon then said unto God, If thou wilt deliver Israel by my

* From *Yarib* "he shall contend," and *Baal.*

hand as thou hast said, behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing-floor, and if there be dew on the fleece only while all the other earth remaineth dry, then shall I know that Thou wilt deliver Israel by my hand. And the thing came so to pass; and when he rose up early on the following day, the fleece was covered with dew, and he wrung out therefore a bowl full of water. Gideon then said again unto the Lord, Be not angry with me, if I beseech thee to give me yet another proof with the fleece. Let the fleece alone be dry, and let there be dew on all the ground. And God did so that night; for all the ground was covered with dew whilst the fleece alone remained dry.

Nevertheless the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too numerous for me to deliver the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel may become vain and boastful against me and say, My own strength hath delivered me. And after twice dismissing the people, so that but three hundred of the most valiant and worthy were left, the Lord said to Gideon, With these three hundred men will I deliver you, and let all the others return each to his dwelling. Gideon did so. During the following night, the Lord said unto him, Arise and go down, with thy servant Phurah, to the camp of the Midianites (which was spread out below in the valley), and hear what they say; for this shall encourage thee yet more, to go down unto their camp boldly. He then descended with his servant Phurah to the armed outposts of the camp. Having arrived, Gideon heard a man relating his dream to his companion in these words, Behold, it appeared to me in my dream,

that a cake of barley was rolling along in the camp of Midian, and when it had reached the tent, it struck against it so that it fell, and was overturned, so that it lay prostrate. The other thereupon replied and said, This meaneth nothing else than the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel; for into his hands hath God delivered Midian and all this host.

Gideon, having heard the recital of this dream and its interpretation, prostrated himself to adore God, and returned thereupon to his camp and said, Arise, for the Lord hath delivered into your hands the host of Midian. He divided his three hundred men into three companies, and gave each man a cornet and an empty pitcher, and he put a burning torch in each of the pitchers; and he said to them, Look on me what I do when I reach the camp, and as I do so shall ye do; when I and my men shall blow the cornet, then blow ye also the cornets all around the camp, and cry, For the Lord and for Gideon. So when Gideon and his one hundred men arrived at the outside of the camp (it was at the moment of changing the second watch of the night), they blew with their cornets, and broke the pitchers which they held in their hands. At the same moment, the other two companies blew likewise their cornets, broke their pitchers, and held their torches in their left hand and the cornets in their right, crying out, The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon. They remained thus standing every one in his place around the camp, the cornet continuing to sound, whereat all the Midianitish host was disordered, crying and fleeing, and were so confused that they turned their swords every man against his fellow

and all the army fled away in different directions. Then the men of Israel, of the tribes of Naphtali and Asher, and of all Menasseh, assembled and pursued Midian, and there perished one hundred and twenty thousand men of the Midianites and their allies. The kings of Midian, Zebach and Zalmunna, were made prisoners; and Gideon had them put to death, because they had killed his brothers. The rest of the enemy's army was dispersed. Midian was thus humbled before Israel and never more raised its head; and the land had peace for forty years during the lifetime of Gideon. The Israelites, however, said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou and thy son, and thy son's son also; for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. But Gideon replied unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; the Lord alone shall be your sovereign. And Gideon lived peaceably in his house; he died in a happy old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, at Ophrah, which belongeth to the family of Abiezer.

V. ABIMELECH—THE CRIMES WHICH AMBITION PROMPTED HIM TO COMMIT—HIS DEATH.

"Yet a little time, and the wicked is no more. The sword of the wicked pierceth their own heart, and their bows are broken." —PSALM xxxvii. 10, 15.

GIDEON, called also Jerubbaal, had seventy sons besides Abimelech, whom he had by another woman at Shechem. This latter went to Shechem to his mother's

brothers, and spoke to them and to their families in this manner, Speak I pray you in the hearing of all the chief men of Shechem, Which is better for you, to be governed by all the sons of Gideon, who are seventy men, or to have but one man to rule over you? And remember also that I am your near relative. The brothers of his mother spoke in his favour to the men of Shechem, so that their hearts inclined towards Abimelech; for they said, He is our brother. They gave him money which they took from the house of their idol, with which he hired immoral and worthless men who followed him. He then went to the house of his father at Ophrah, and slew all his brothers on one stone, with the exception of Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon, who had hid himself. The chiefs of Shechem and of Beth-Millo thereupon assembled, and made Abimelech king. When Jotham was informed thereof, he went to the top of Mount Gerizzim, and elevating his voice cried aloud, Listen to me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. The trees went forth once upon a time to anoint a king to reign over them; and they said to the olive-tree, Reign thou over us; but the olive-tree answered them, Shall I leave my fatness with which by me they honour God and man, to go and worry myself about the trees? Then the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou and reign over us; but the fig-tree answered, Shall I quit my sweetness and my good fruit, to go and trouble myself about the trees? The trees then addressed the vine and said, Come thou and reign over us; but the vine answered, Shall I neglect my wine which cheereth God and man, and go and trouble myself about the

trees? Then all the trees said to the bramble, Come thou and reign over us; and the bramble answered the trees, If in sincerity ye wish to anoint me king over you, then come and take shelter under my shadow; and if not, let a fire come forth from the bramble and consume the cedars of Lebanon. Now then, added Jotham, if ye have acted truly and honestly in making Abimelech king; and if ye have therein dealt well with Jerubbaal and his family; and if ye have thereby done unto him according to his merits, since he, my father, fought for you, exposed his life and delivered you from the hands of Midian, and ye have this day arisen against my father's house, and have slaughtered his sons, seventy men on one stone, and have established Abimelech, the son of his maid-servant, as king over the men of Shechem, because he is your kinsman; and if ye have dealt truly and honestly with Jerubbaal and his house this day: then rejoice in Abimelech, and may he rejoice in you; but if otherwise, may a fire go out from Abimelech and consume the men of Shechem and Beth-Millo; and let fire go out from the men of Shechem and Beth-Millo and consume Abimelech! Jotham then fled speedily and took shelter in Beër, where he kept himself concealed on account of his brother Abimelech. Now when Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel, God caused discord to arise between Abimelech and the men of Shechem, who became unfaithful to Abimelech, in order that the cruelty committed on the seventy sons of Gideon, and their blood, might fall on their brother Abimelech who had slain them, and on the men of Shechem who had assisted him in that horrible slaughter of his bro-

thers. At this same time, and in the absence of Abimelech, there arrived at Shechem a certain Gaäl, son of Ebed, who said to the inhabitants of Shechem, Who is Abimelech and what is Shechem, that we should submit to him? He is but a son of Jerubbaal, why should we then obey him? Would it not be better that ye serve a descendant of Chamor, the father of Shechem? If these people would but confide in me, I would depose Abimelech. And the men of Shechem placed their confidence in him. Zebul, the governor of the city under Abimelech, having heard the words of Gaäl, sent to forewarn Abimelech, who returned with an army towards Shechem; and Gaäl, who commanded the men of Shechem against Abimelech, was put to flight, and many perished in the engagement. Abimelech then took possession of Shechem, which he razed to the ground after having killed all who were therein. He also set fire to the fort which served as a temple to the god Berith, where the inhabitants of the tower of Shechem had fled for refuge; so that there perished about one thousand persons, men and women. Abimelech then besieged Tebez and took possession thereof. But there was in the midst of the city a strong tower, to which all the inhabitants had fled. Having arrived at the tower, Abimelech drew nigh to set it on fire; but a woman cast down a piece of a mill-stone on his head and fractured his skull. He immediately called to the young man who bore his arms, and said to him, Draw thy sword and slay me, that men may not say of me, A woman hath slain him. His armour-bearer then thrust him through and he died. Now when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was

dead, they returned every one to his home. Thus was it that God punished the crimes which Abimelech had committed against his father, in slaying his seventy brothers. God in like manner caused the wickedness of the people of Shechem to return on their own heads; and thus was fulfilled the curse of Jotham the son of Gideon.

VI. TOLA, JAIR, AND JEPHTHA, JUDGES IN ISRAEL.

A. M. 2737—2788.

"It is a snare for a man to say hastily, (This thing shall be) holy and to investigate afterwards the vows."—PROV. xx. 25.

AFTER the death of Abimelech, Tola, the son of Puah, of the tribe of Issachar, judged Israel twenty-three years. Jaïr, a Gileadite, who succeeded him, was judge twenty-two years. But the Israelites had again abandoned the service of the Lord, and had embraced the worship of the Baalim and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, of Sidon, and of the other nations that surrounded them. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he delivered them into the power of the Philistines and the Ammonites, who oppressed them cruelly during eighteen years. And the children of Israel humbled themselves before the Lord and cried, We have sinned against Thee; for we have forsaken our God and served idols. Then they cast out from among them the false gods and served the Lord; then the Lord had pity on their misery and resolved to save them. Now the Ammonites had gathered themselves together and encamped at

Gilead. Israel assembled and encamped at Mitzpeh. The people and the chiefs of Gilead agreed among themselves that whoever should commence the attack against the Ammonites, should be the chief of all the inhabitants of Gilead. At this time, there was in the country of Gilead a strong and valiant man named Yiphtach (Jephtha). He had several brothers, who being grown unto manhood, drove him from the paternal roof, saying, Thou shalt not inherit any share in our father's house, for thou art the son of a strange woman. Jephtha then fled from his brothers and established himself in the land of Tob, where all sorts of idle men gathered themselves together unto him and served under him, wandering over the land. War having broken out between Ammon and Israel, the elders of Gilead went and sought Jephtha in the land of Tob, and said to him, Come be our chief in our war against Ammon. But Jephtha replied, Do ye not hate me, since ye expelled me from my father's house? wherefore are ye come unto me, now when ye are in distress? And they replied unto him, We have come unto thee for the purpose that thou shouldst go with us, and make war against the people of Ammon, and that thou shouldst be also our chief, unto all the inhabitants of Gilead. Jephtha then answered the elders of Gilead, If ye take me back with you to fight the children of Ammon and the Lord delivereth them into my hands, shall I still remain your chief? and the elders answered him saying, May the Lord witness between us if we do not as thou hast spoken. And Jephtha departed with the elders of Gilead, and the people elected him their chief and general. But Jephtha

repeated before the Lord at Mitzpeh the treaty he had made with the elders. He then sent ambassadors to the King of the Ammonites, to induce him to withdraw and abandon a war which was not justified by any aggression on the part of the Israelites. But the King of Ammon refused to listen to the message which Jephtha had sent to him. Jephtha then, animated with a divine spirit, went out to fight against the Ammonites. And he made a vow to the Lord saying, If thou wilt deliver the Ammonites into my hands, then shall it be that whatsoever cometh forth out of the doors of my house to meet me, shall appertain unto the Lord, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering. He then advanced against the Ammonites, whom the Lord delivered into his hands. He made a very great slaughter and took from them twenty cities, so that they were humbled before Israel. Jephtha returned victorious towards his house at Mitzpeh, when his daughter, who was his only child, ran to meet him, dancing to the sound of timbrels. As soon as he perceived her he rent his garments, crying out, Oh, my daughter! how hast thou cast me down! how hast thou grieved me! But I have made a vow unto the Lord, and I cannot retract my word. She replied, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do with me according to that which hath proceeded from thy mouth; since the Lord hath avenged thee of thy enemies, the children of Ammon. Nevertheless, she continued, grant me yet two months that I may wander in the mountains with my companions, and weep on their bosom over my cruel destiny. Her father granted her what she requested. She went with her companions

wandering about the mountains, and mourned with them during two months. She then returned to her father's house, who did with her according to the vow which he had made. He consecrated her unto the Lord, and she lived separated from the world in a pious retreat. Nevertheless, it was an established custom in Israel, that every year the Israelitish maidens went to mourn with the daughter of Jephtha for four days. Jephtha died after having been a Judge in Israel six years, and he was buried in one of the cities of Gilead. After him were judges in Israel Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, the son of Hillel.

VII. BIRTH OF SAMSON, A JUDGE OF ISRAEL.

A. M. 2811—2831.

"In Thee, our fathers trusted; they had faith in Thee and Thou didst deliver them."—PSALM xxii. 5.

Now the children of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and he delivered them into the hands of the Philistines during forty years. At this time there lived a man of the tribe of Dan, named Manoach, who had no children. It now happened that an angel of the Lord appeared one day unto the wife of Manoach and said to her, Thou hast been barren until now; but thou shalt bear a son: now, henceforth beware; take thou care to drink neither wine nor other fermented liquor, and eat nothing unclean; let not a razor pass over the head of the child whom thou shalt bear, for he shall be NAZIR (consecrated to God) from his birth; he it is who shall begin to deliver Israel from

the hands of the Philistines. Then the woman returned to her house and related it unto her husband. Manoach prayed unto the Lord and said, O Lord! permit the divine man whom thou hast sent to return again among us that he may teach us how to act towards the child which shall be born. And God heard the prayer of Manoach; the angel of the Lord appeared again unto the woman while she was in the field, and her husband was not with her. And she ran immediately to announce it to her husband, who hastened to follow her; and having drawn nigh unto the man, Manoach said unto him, Art thou the man who spokest to this woman? And he replied I am. And Manoach continued, When the event which thou hast announced shall happen, how shall we act with the child? And the angel of the Lord replied, Let the woman beware of all that I have said unto her; all that I have commanded her she must observe. Manoach then begged the angel of the Lord to tarry, and eat of a kid which he would prepare for him. But the latter replied, Even if thou detain me, I will not eat of thy food; but if thou desirest to make a burnt-offering, offer it to the Lord. Manoach, not knowing that it was an angel of the Lord, said to him, What is thy name? so that when thy words shall be fulfilled, we may testify our gratitude to thee. But the angel of the Lord replied, Wherefore askest thou thus after my name, seeing that it is a secret? Manoach then took a kid, with a meat-offering, and placed the same on a rock in honour of the Lord, who performed a miracle in the sight of Manoach and his wife in the following manner. At the moment that the flame as-

cended from the altar towards heaven, the angel of the Lord ascended with the flame of the altar. Manoach and his wife on perceiving this, fell with their faces towards the ground. And Manoach said to his wife, We shall surely die, for we have seen an angel. But the wife of Manoach replied, If the Lord had wished to slay us, he would not have accepted a burnt and meat-offering at our hands, nor would he have let us see these things, nor let us hear at this time such things as these. And the woman bore a son, whom she named Samson (Shimshon), and the child grew up, and the Lord blessed him, and soon the spirit of the Lord began to be manifest in him.

VIII. THE WONDERFUL STRENGTH AND EXPLOITS OF SAMSON.

"But they that wait on the Lord shall ever acquire new strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not become faint."—ISAIAH xl. 31.

SAMSON said one day to his parents, I have seen at Timnath a daughter of the Philistines; I beseech ye get her for me for a wife. But his parents replied, Is there no wife for thee among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all our people, that thou goest to take a wife among the idolatrous Philistines? And Samson said to his father, Obtain her for me, for she pleaseth me. His father and his mother knew not that it was the will of the Lord, so that Samson might find the opportunity which he sought for a quarrel with the Philistines, who

then ruled over Israel. So Samson went with his father and mother to Timnath. But when he had arrived near the vineyards of Timnath, a young lion advanced, roaring, towards him. Samson, animated with the divine spirit, rent the lion as he would have rent a kid, without having anything in his hand; but he told not his father or mother what he had done. A few days afterwards, as he passed by the same road, he turned to view the carcass of the lion; and behold there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass. He took of the honey in his hand, and went on his way eating it; then arriving at his parents' house, he gave some unto them, and they ate also; but he told them not, that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.

His father then went down to see the woman whom Samson desired, and the latter gave a feast, as was customary with the young men; and they gave him on this occasion thirty companions (Philistines) who remained with him. Samson said to them, I will give you a riddle; if ye guess it during the seven days of the nuptial feast, I will give you thirty shirts and thirty changes of garments; but if ye cannot give me its explanation, during these seven days, then shall ye give unto me the like number of shirts and garments. And they said to him, Propose thy riddle, that we may hear it. He said to them, Out of the devourer came forth food, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not guess the riddle. On the seventh day they said to the wife of Samson, Entice thy husband that through thee the riddle be explained unto us; otherwise we will burn thee and the house of thy father! Have

ye invited us here only to despoil us of what we have? The wife of Samson then entreated him so much with her tears and prayers, that he explained to her the meaning of the riddle; and she then told it to her countrymen. These said to Samson on the seventh day before the setting of the sun, What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? And Samson replied, If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye would not have found out my riddle. Then he went to Ascalon, and slew thirty men, whose spoils he took, and gave the thirty suits he had promised to those who explained his riddle; after which, inflamed with anger, he returned to the house of his father. But Samson's wife was given to one of those who had been his companions, whom he had used as his friend.

Some time afterwards, at the time of the wheat harvest, Samson went to visit his wife; but his father-in-law would not let him enter, saying, I thought that thou didst hate her, and I gave her to one of thy companions; is not her younger sister fairer than she? Take her, I pray thee, instead of her. Then Samson said, Now shall I not think myself guilty towards the Philistines though I do them harm. And he went and took three hundred foxes, which he tied two by two by the tail; then having fastened a firebrand between each pair, he drove them into the fields of corn of the Philistines, and thus burnt their corn, their vines, and their olive groves.

When the Philistines learned that it was Samson who had done this, because they had given his wife to another, they burnt the woman as well as her father. Nevertheless, Samson continued to execute his vengeance

upon them; he worsted them, and made great carnage among the people. And he then retired to the rock of Etam. The Philistines then went and encamped in the territory of Judah, and the men of Judah having asked them, Why are ye come up against us? The Philistines replied, We come to seize Samson and to do unto him as he has done unto us. Three thousand men of Judah then went to the rock of Etam and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines rule over us? What is this that thou hast done unto us? He replied, I have acted towards them as they have acted towards me. They then said to him, We have come to bind thee and to deliver thee into the hands of the Philistines. But Samson said unto them, Swear to me that you will not attempt my life. And they answered him, No; we will only bind thee and deliver thee into their hands; but we will not kill thee. They then bound him with two new cords and brought him away. When he came to Lehi, and the Philistines at seeing him had set up a cry of rejoicing, a supernatural strength animated him, and the cords which bound his arms became as flax singed by the fire, and the bands fell off from his hands. At the same moment he perceived the jaw-bone of an ass, he seized it and slew therewith a thousand men. Then feeling an exceeding great thirst, he called on the Lord saying, Thou hast given this great deliverance by the hand of thy servant, and now shall I die of thirst, and fall into the hands of these idolaters? Immediately the Lord cleft the rock which is near Lehi, and water sprang forth; and Samson drank, and his spirit came again, and his strength was restored.

The inhabitants of Gaza having one day learnt that Samson was in their city, passed the whole night in ambush near the gate of the city to surprise him. They said one to another, Let us stir not until morning, and when it is day we will kill him. And Samson, after having slept till midnight, arose, seized the doors and the two posts of the gate of the city, and carried them with the bar, and placed them on the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron.

IX. SAMSON IS BETRAYED AND MADE PRISONER — HE DIES IN REVENGING HIMSELF ON HIS ENEMIES.

"Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister, call prudence thy friend, that thou mayest preserve thyself from the vicious woman, from the stranger with deceitful words."—PROV. vii. 4-5.

AFTER this Samson loved a woman named Delilah, in the valley of Sorek. The princes of Philistia came to her and said, Persuade Samson, and endeavour to find out in what consists his extraordinary strength, that we may prevail against him and subdue him, and we will each give thee eleven hundred pieces of silver. Delilah therefore said unto Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and with what thou mightest be bound to subdue thee? Samson replied, If they bind me with seven fresh cords which are not yet dry, I shall become weak and be as any other man. The lords of the Philistines brought seven green cords, with which she bound him. And men were concealed in the same room with her. Then she said unto him, The Philistines are upon thee, Samson! And he broke

the cords as one would break a thread of tow when it toucheth the fire. Then Delilah said unto him, Thou hast mocked me and told me lies; but now, tell me, I pray thee, with what thou mightest be bound? He answered her, If they bind me fast with new ropes which have never been used, I shall be powerless, and become as another man. Delilah took new ropes and bound him, then cried out, The Philistines are upon thee, Samson! But he broke the ropes from about his arms like a thread. And Delilah said to him, Until now thou hast mocked me and told me lies—tell me truly, with what thou mightest be bound? And he answered, If thou weavest the seven locks of my hair with the web. She did so, and having fastened it with a pin she cried out, The Philistines are upon thee, Samson! and he awoke out of his sleep and drew out the pin with the web. She then said to him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me? Three times now hast thou deceived me, and hast not confided to me wherein thy great strength lieth. Thus did she torment him day by day with her speeches; and she urged him so much, that he was vexed even unto death. At length he opened his heart unto her and said, No razor hath ever passed over my head, for I am a Nazarite consecrated to God from my birth. If my hair be cut, all my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man. Delilah, easily perceiving that he had opened all his heart unto her, sent and called for the Philistine princes, and said to them, This time ye may come, for he hath opened his whole heart unto me. The princes then came to her house, each with the money he had promised. She

caused Samson to fall asleep upon her knees; she then called a man, who cut off the seven locks of his head. Thus she weakened him, and his strength went from him. Then she cried out, The Philistines are upon thee, Samson! He awoke, and said, I shall go free, as I have done other times before, and I will rouse myself; but he knew not the Lord had departed from him. The Philistines seized him and put out his eyes; they led him to Gaza, and chained him in a prison, where he was employed to turn the mill.

One day the princes of the Philistines were assembled for a great sacrifice to Dagon, their god, and for rejoicing, for they said, Our god hath delivered our enemy Samson into our hands. And the people when they saw Samson, also praised their god and repeated, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, the destroyer of our country, and him who hath slain so many of us. When they were full of joy, they cried out, Let Samson be brought forth that he may make sport for us. And they brought out Samson from his prison, and he was forced to make sport for them. Now his hair had commenced to grow again. As they placed him between the pillars, he said to the lad who led him by the hand, Suffer me to go and let me feel the pillars that support the house, so that I may lean upon them. Now the house was full of men and women, and the Philistine princes were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women who looked on while Samson made sport. Then Samson invoked the Lord and said, O Lord God! remember me, I beseech thee; and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may revenge myself

at once on the Philistines for my two eyes. Then, seizing by the middle the two pillars that supported the edifice, he cried out, Let me die with the Philistines! and he bent himself forward, with all his strength, and the house fell down on the princes and all the people that were therein. Thus, in dying, he caused more to perish than he had slain in all his life. After which his brothers came with all his family, withdrew his corpse, and buried it in the sepulchre of his father Manoach, between Zorah and Eshtaol; and he had judged Israel twenty years.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

מגלת רות

I. ATTACHMENT AND DEVOTION OF RUTH FOR NAOMI, HER MOTHER-IN-LAW.

"Many daughters are distinguished for their virtues; but thou surpassest them all."—PROV. xxxi. 29.

IT happened, during the time of the Judges, that there was a famine in the land; and a certain man of Bethlehem, in Judah, went with his wife and his two sons to sojourn in the plains of Moab. The name of this man was Elimelech, and his wife was called Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Kilion. After they had arrived in the land of Moab, Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons. These married two Moabitish women: the name of one was named Orpah, and that of the other Ruth. They dwelt there about ten years, when Mahlon and Kilion died: thus this woman remained alone, deprived of her two sons and her husband. She resolved to quit the plains of Moab, for she had learned that the Lord had had pity on his people and had given them bread. So she set out with her two daughters-in-law to return to the land of Judah. But while they

were on their way, Naomi said to her daughters-in-law: Go, return each to the house of her mother; may the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the deceased and with me! May he cause you to find again happiness in the house of a new husband! And Naomi then kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept; and they said unto her, We prefer returning with thee to thy people. Naomi replied, Return, O my children; wherefore would you go with me? why renounce the idea of a new marriage? No, my daughters, for it grieveth me much for your sakes, that the hand of the Lord hath been stretched forth against me. They again lifted up their voices and wept. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth persisted in remaining with her. And Naomi said unto her, See, thy sister-in-law hath returned to her people and her gods; return thou also after her. But Ruth replied, Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following thee; for whither thou goest I will go; where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried. May God punish me now and evermore if aught but death part me from thee. Naomi, seeing that she was firmly resolved to accompany her, ceased speaking to her on that subject. And they went thus together towards Bethlehem. When they arrived there, all the people of the city said with amazement, Is this Naomi? And she answered them, call me not Naomi (gracious), but call me Mara (bitter), for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I departed hence loaded with wealth, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty. Wherefore, then, do

ye call me Naomi, since the Lord hath loaded me with misfortunes? Thus did Naomi return from the plains of Moab, with her daughter-in-law Ruth, the Moabitess, and they arrived at Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

II. BOAZ—HIS KINDNESS AND HUMANITY TOWARDS RUTH.

"The soul of the benevolent is full of rejoicing; it prospereth in succouring others. He who hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and God will give him his recompense."—PROV. xix. 17.

NAOMI had in the city a relative of her husband's, a powerful and virtuous man, of the family of Elimelech, named Boaz. One day Ruth said to Naomi, Let me, I pray thee, go into the fields, and glean ears after him in whose sight I may find grace; and she replied, Go, my daughter. She went forth, and entered a field and gleaned behind the reapers. Now it happened that this was the field of Boaz, of the family of Elimelech. And lo! Boaz arrived from Bethlehem, and he said to the reapers, The Lord be with you! and they answered, The Lord bless thee! Boaz then said to his servant who had the care of the reapers, Who is this young woman? And he replied, She is a young Moabitish woman, who came back with Naomi from the plains of Moab; and she said unto me, Permit me, I pray thee, to glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves. Thus she came and hath continued here from the morning until now that she hath rested a little while in the house. Boaz then said unto Ruth, Hearken, my daughter! go not to glean in any other field; remain here always near my

handmaids, and follow them in the field where they reap. I have already ordered my young men not to offend thee in anything; and if thou art thirsty, go and drink what the men have drawn. Ruth bowed down before him and said, How have I deserved the kindness with which thou loadest me, seeing that I am a stranger? And Boaz answered her saying, It hath been fully told me all that thou hast done for thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband, and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not before; may the Lord recompense thy work, and may a full reward be given thee from the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to seek refuge. And she said, Let me find grace in thy sight, my lord; for thou hast comforted me, and because thou hast spoken kindly unto thy handmaid; though I be not as much as one of thy maidens. Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy piece in the vinegar. And she sat down beside the reapers, and he gave her some parched corn; she ate, was satisfied, and left thereof. When she had arisen again to glean, Boaz commanded his servants, saying, Let her glean even between the sheaves, and offend her not. Let also drop for her, on purpose, some of the handfulls, and leave them for her that she may gather them, and rebuke her not. Thus she gleaned in the field until the evening; and when she had beaten out what she had gathered, there was about an ephah of barley. She carried it and returned to the city to her mother-in-law, to whom she gave it, and also what she had re-

served after she was satisfied. And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? Blessed be he who hath taken cognizance of thee! Ruth replied, The name of the man in whose field I gleaned to-day is Boaz. Then Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law, Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not withdrawn his kindness from the living and from the dead. Naomi also said, The man is one of our near kinsmen. Ruth said, He said also unto me, Remain near my servants until they have finished all my harvest. And Naomi replied, It will also be better for thee, my daughter, to go out with his handmaids, than that people should meet with thee in any other field. So she remained attached to the handmaids of Boaz, to glean until the end of the barley harvest and of the wheat harvest. And she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

III. BOAZ MARRIES RUTH.

"House and riches are the inheritance from the fathers; but a prudent wife is a gift from the Lord."—PROV. xix. 14.

NAOMI then said to her daughter-in-law, My daughter, I wish to obtain thee a resting-place, that it may be well with thee. Our kinsman, Boaz, with the maidens with whom thou wast, winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor: go in unto him on the threshing-floor, and he will there tell thee what thou hast to do. Ruth did as her mother-in-law had commanded her; and when Boaz had eaten, and drunk, and was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn. Then

Ruth went softly and laid herself down at his feet. But, near midnight, feeling somebody at his feet, he was frightened and cried out, Who art thou? and she said, I am Ruth, thy handmaid, give me thy protection, for thou art our near kinsman. And he said unto her, May the Lord bless thee, my daughter; this last proof of thy piety surpasseth all that thou hast hitherto done, inasmuch as thou hast not followed the young men, whether poor or rich. Fear not, my daughter, I will do for thee all that thou requirest, for all the city knoweth that thou art a virtuous woman. I am, in truth, thy near kinsman; but there is another yet nearer than I; to-morrow we will see; if he will use his right of kin and take thee for wife, let him do so; but if he will not do so, I will espouse thee, truly as the Lord liveth. As soon as the day began to break, Boaz said to Ruth, Hold out thy veil which thou hast on, and hold it well. She held it out, and he poured therein six measures of barley, with which she returned to the city. When she came to her mother-in-law, she related to her all that had passed between her and the man; and she said, These six measures of barley he gave unto me, for he said to me, Thou shalt not return empty-handed to thy mother-in-law. The latter then said, Remain quiet, my daughter, until thou learnest how this matter will terminate; for the man will not rest until he hath finished the thing this very day.

Now Boaz had gone to the gate of the city and set himself down there, until the kinsman of whom he had spoken passed by; and Boaz, having called him, and said to him, Come here and be seated, he drew near

and sat down. Boaz then took ten men of the elders of the city and said to them, Sit ye down here; and they sat down. Then Boaz said unto the kinsman: Naomi, who is returned from the land of Moab, hath sold a parcel of land which belonged to our kinsman Elimelech; and I thought it my duty to tell thee of it; saying, Buy it back, in the presence of those who sit here, and in the presence of the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, do so; but if not, then tell me, and it will then be my duty, as I am the next after thee. And the kinsman replied, I will redeem it. Boaz then said, When thou acquirest the field from the hand of Naomi, thou wilt also obtain Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the deceased, and thou must establish the name of the deceased on his heritage (by marrying his widow). The kinsman replied, I cannot buy it on those terms; exercise in my place the right of a kinsman. Boaz immediately using the right of redemption, said to the elders and to all the people, Ye are witnesses this day that I have bought from Naomi all that appertained to Elimelech, and all that belonged to Kilion and Mahlon, and that moreover thereby I have obtained for wife Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, in order to re-establish the name of the dead in his inheritance, that it be not blotted out from among his brothers nor from the gate of his native city; ye are witnesses this day. And all those people who were in the gate said, We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman who entereth thy house as Rachel and Leah, who together established the house of Israel; and may thy prosperity increase in Ephratah, and may thy name become famous in Bethlehem; and

may thy house become flourishing as the house of Parez through the offspring which the Lord will give thee from this young woman. Boaz then married Ruth, and when she bore him a son the women said unto Naomi, Praised be the Lord, who hath not withheld from thee this day a kinsman; and may his name be famous in Israel! And may he be unto thee a restorer of life and the support of thy old age; for thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee, who is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him. Naomi took the child, placed it on her bosom, and became a nurse unto it. Her neighbours said, There is a son born unto Naomi; and they called him Obed. And he became the father of Jesse (Jishai), who was the father of David.

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL.

כפר שמואל

. ELI, HIGH PRIEST AND JUDGE IN ISRAEL—PIETY AND FERVOUR OF HANNAH—THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL.

A. M. 2831—2870.

"Those who sow in tears, shall reap in joy."—PSALM cxxvi. 7.

AFTER the death of Samson, at the time when the High Priest Eli was Judge in Israel, there lived at Ramathayim Zophim, in the mountains of Ephraim, a man named Elkanah, who had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. The latter had children, but Hannah had none. And Elkanah loved Hannah; but Peninnah pained her continually by reminding her of her being childless. When Hannah, therefore, accompanied Elkanah to Shiloh, where he was accustomed to go every year to worship the Lord, and to offer up sacrifices before Him, she was so afflicted, that she neither ate nor drank, but wept continually. Her husband then said to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? why is thy heart grieved? am I not better to thee than ten children? Now, it happened one day, after they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, that Hannah arose and implored the Lord; her soul was full of sorrow, and she wept abun-

dantly. And she made a vow and said, O Lord of Hosts! if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid, and remember me and not forget thy handmaid, and grant a male child unto thy handmaid, I will consecrate him for all the days of his life to the Lord; and no razor shall pass over his head. As she continued thus a long time supplicating before the Lord, the Priest Eli, sitting on his seat in the porch of the tabernacle of the Lord, observed the mouth of Hannah, who speaking in her inward heart, moved only her lips, but her voice was not heard; wherefore, Eli thought she was drunk. And he said unto her, How long wilt thou remain drunk? put away thy wine from thee. But Hannah answered and said to him, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit, I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink; but I have poured out my soul before the Lord. Take not thy handmaid for a despicable woman; for out of the abundance of my complaint and my grief have I spoken until now. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant thee thy petition which thou hast asked of Him. She then said, May thy handmaid continue to find grace in thy sight. Then she went her way, and ate, and her face was no longer sorrowful as before. The next day they rose early and prostrated themselves in adoration before the Lord, and returned to their home to Ramah. Some time after, the Lord had pity on Hannah, and she bore a son, and called his name Samuel; for, said she, I have asked him from the Lord. Her husband, Elkanah, set out shortly after with all his household to go and offer his annual sacrifice and his

vows to the Lord. But Hannah went not up; for she said to her husband, I will tarry till the child be weaned, then will I bring him that he may appear before the Lord, and abide there for ever. And Elkanah answered her, Do what seemeth good to thee. So the woman remained at home, and nourished her child until he was weaned. After having weaned him, she carried him up to Shiloh, to the house of the lord, although the child was still very young. She presented the child to Eli, and said to him, Pardon, me, my lord, I am the woman who stood by thee here, to pray unto the Lord. For this child did I pray, and the Lord hath granted me what I asked of him. Also I have vowed him unto the Lord, and as long as he liveth, he shall be dedicated unto the Lord. And Samuel prostrated himself before the Lord.

Then Hannah prayed and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord; my horn is exalted in the Lord; my mouth is enlarged over my enemies, because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the Lord; for there is none beside thee; neither is there any power like our God. Talk no more so exceedingly proudly; let not arrogance come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him are all actions weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken, and they that stumble are girded with strength. They who lived in splendour have hired themselves out for bread, and they who were hungry cease to want; whilst the barren woman hath borne seven times, she who had many children groweth feeble. The Lord killeth and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord

maketh poor, and maketh rich. He bringeth low and lifteth up. He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the seat of honour: for unto the Lord belong the pillars of the earth, and He hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, but the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. He is the Lord; his adversaries shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven will He thunder upon them. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth; and He will give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed. Elkanah, after this, returned to his house at Ramah, and the child remained a servant unto the Lord, under the guidance of Eli. And Samuel served even then before the Lord; he was clothed with a linen ephod. His mother made him a little coat, which she brought to him every year when she went up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice. And the young Samuel grew up thus in the service of the Lord.

II. THE IMPIETY OF THE SONS OF ELI DRAWS DOWN THE MALEDICTION OF HEAVEN ON THEIR HOUSE.

"Chastise thy son while there is yet hope, and be not moved on account of his cries."—PROV. xix. 18.

THE two sons of Eli, Hofni and Phinehas, were dissolute men, and they knew not the Lord. They committed all sorts of wrong and iniquity in their priestly office; they arrogated to themselves unjust rights over the offerings of the people; and they profaned the sacrifices

offered to God; thus their sins were very great before the Lord. Eli, who was very old, heard of all the wrongs which his sons committed against Israel; and he said to them, Why do you act in such a manner, that I hear nothing but evil reports of you among all the people? Act no longer thus, O my sons; for the report which I hear is not favourable. If a man offend his neighbour, the judge will decide; but if a man sinneth against the Lord, who will intercede for him? Nevertheless, they listened not to the advice of their father. And a man of God came unto Eli, and said unto him, thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I said to myself that thou and thy father's house should walk before me for ever; but now that ye despise my worship, by polluting my sacrifices and my offerings: be it far from me (*to permit you the glory of serving me*), for I will honour those only who honour me, but those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed. I will cause the downfall of thy father's house, so that there shall never be an old man in thy house, and all the young men shall die in the flower of their age; and this shall be to thee a sign what shall befall thy two sons Hofni and Phinehas: they shall both die on the same day; and I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall act according to what is in my heart, and in my mind; and I will build him up a durable house, and he shall walk before my anointed for ever.

III. FIRST REVELATION OF GOD TO SAMUEL.

"Even a child maketh known by his doings whether his conduct in life will be pure, and whether it will be right."—PROV. xx. 11.

Now the young Samuel grew up and was in favour

both with the Lord and with the people. He ministered at all times before the Lord, under the guidance of Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; the prophetic spirit was not generally spread abroad. One day when Eli had laid himself down to rest, (his sight had begun to be dim, he could no longer see clearly,) and the lamp of the Lord was not yet extinguished, Samuel was lying in the tabernacle of the Lord, where the ark of God was; and the Lord called Samuel, and he answered, Here am I; and ran unto Eli, saying, Here am I, for thou didst call me. And Eli replied, I did not call thee, lie down again; and he went and lay down. The Lord then called again, Samuel! and he arose, and went unto Eli and said, Here am I, for thou didst call me. But Eli replied, I did not call thee, my son; lie down again. But Samuel knew not yet the Lord: the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed unto him. And the Lord called a third time, Samuel! and he arose again and went unto Eli, saying, Here am I, for thou didst call me. Then Eli understood that the Lord had called the lad. And he said unto Samuel, Go and lie down, and if thou be called again, say, Speak, O Lord, for thy servant heareth; so Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the Lord came and called as before, Samuel! Samuel! And he answered, Speak, for thy servant heareth. And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. On that day will I accomplish against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house; for I have warned him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity, that he knew, that his

sons were making themselves vile, and he restrained them not. Wherefore have I sworn unto the house of Eli, that its iniquities shall not be purged by sacrifices nor offerings for ever. Samuel then lay until the morning. Now he feared to relate his vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel, and said to him, What did the Lord say unto thee? I pray thee hide nothing from me; may God punish thee if thou conceal a single word of all that He said unto thee! Then Samuel related to him all that had been told him. Whereupon Eli said, It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth to Him good. And Samuel grew up; and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. All Israel also, even from Dan to Beërsheba, recognised that Samuel was truly a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord continued to manifest himself in Shiloh; for at Shiloh he revealed himself to Samuel by his divine word.

IV. DEATH OF ELI AND HIS TWO SONS.

"A foolish son is the affliction of his father, and bitterness to her who bore him."—PROV. xvii. 25.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."—Prov. xiv. 34.

Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle; but they were beaten and forced to flee. When the people returned to the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the Lord permitted us to be beaten this day by the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, and let it

come in the midst of us and deliver us from our enemies. The people then sent to Shiloh, and caused the ark of the covenant of the Lord to be brought, and the two sons of Eli, Hofni and Phinehas, were there with the ark. However, the Philistines fought, and Israel was again vanquished, and every man fled to his tent. The ark of God also was taken, and the two sons of Eli perished. A certain Benjamite fled from the battle and ran to Shiloh, where he arrived the same day, his clothes torn, and his head covered with dust. Eli was seated on a chair near the highway, waiting for news: for his heart trembled with uneasiness on account of the ark of the Lord. And when the man brought the news into the city, all its inhabitants cried out in despair. Eli was then ninety-eight years old, and his eyes were dim; he could not see; but hearing these cries, he said, What meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man related to Eli that Israel had suffered a great defeat, that his two sons had perished, and that the ark of God had been taken. As soon as he made mention of the ark of God, Eli fell backwards from his seat, broke his neck, and died. He had judged Israel forty years. When his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, who was on the eve of confinement, heard of the death of her husband and her father-in-law, and the news of the taking of the ark of God, she travailed, and died in giving birth to a son, whom she named Ichabod, (that is to say, Where is thy glory?) for she said, The glory is departed from Israel, because the ark of God hath been taken away.

V. THE HOLY ARK IN THE TEMPLE OF DAGON—THE PHILISTINES SEND IT BACK, BEING TERRIFIED BY THEIR CHASTISEMENT.

"The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the works of man's hands."—PSALM CXXXV. 15.

THE Philistines, who had taken the ark of God, carried it to Ashdod, and brought it into the temple of Dagon, and placed it near Dagon (their idol). But when the inhabitants of Ashdod arose the next day, they found Dagon fallen upon his face on the ground, before the ark of the Lord. They raised up the idol and put it in his place. Yet when they arose the next morning, Dagon was again fallen upon his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord; his head and his hands were broken off, and lying on the threshold, only the body of Dagon was left of him. And the hand of the Lord weighed heavily on the inhabitants of Ashdod; so they sent away the ark of God to Gath. But the hand of the Lord smote also the inhabitants of that city, and there was great consternation and dismay therein; so that they sent away the ark of the Lord to Ekron. But as soon as the ark of God arrived at Ekron, the inhabitants of Ekron cried out, They have brought the ark of the God of Israel unto us, that we may all perish. Then all the chiefs of the Philistines assembled there and said, Let us send away the ark of the God of Israel to its own place, so that it slay us not and our people; for a mortal terror had seized all the city, because the hand of God was heavy upon them.

After the ark of the Lord had dwelt thus seven months

in the territory of the Philistines, having consulted their priest and diviners, they sent it back in the following manner: They made a new cart, to which they harnessed two young cows that had never yet borne a yoke; they placed therein the ark, and a chest containing vessels of gold, which they offered as an expiation; and the beasts immediately took the road to Beth-Shemesh, without turning to the right or to the left; and the chiefs of the Philistines followed the ark to the borders of Beth-Shemesh. When the people of Beth-Shemesh, who were then celebrating the harvest, perceived the ark, they rejoiced to see it once more. The cart stopped in the field of Joshua, of Beth-Shemesh. They split the wood of the cart, and offered the cows as a burnt-offering to the Lord. The Levites had taken down the ark of the Lord, and the chest containing the golden vessels, and placed them on a great stone. And the people offered, on that day, burnt-offerings and sacrifices in honour of the Lord.

VI. THE ISRAELITES UNDER THE COMMAND OF SAMUEL GAIN A VICTORY OVER THE PHILISTINES—CORRUPT CONDUCT OF THE SONS OF SAMUEL.

"A wise son receiveth instruction; but he that is a companion of riotous men, dishonoureth his father."—PROV. xxviii. 7.

THE ark of the Lord was removed from Beth-Shemesh to Kiryath-Yeärim, where it remained during twenty years. The house of Israel at this time walked in the ways of the Lord. And Samuel said unto all Israel, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your heart, put

away all the strange gods from among you, and direct your hearts towards the Lord and serve Him, and Him only; then will He deliver you from the hands of the Philistines. And the children of Israel did as Samuel had told them. Then Samuel assembled all Israel at Mitzpeh; he then implored the Lord, and offered sacrifices on behalf of Israel. And when the Philistines heard that all Israel had assembled at Mitzpeh, the princes of the Philistines went up against Israel. But the Lord caused his thunder to resound against the Philistines; He sent confusion among their ranks, and they were smitten before Israel. The Philistines were then subdued, and they dared no more to come up into the land of Israel; and the cities which they had taken from the latter, fell again into the hands of Israel. Now Samuel was judge in Israel during all his lifetime. Every year he went from city to city to administer justice; and when he grew old, he established his sons as judges in Israel. The elder was named Joël, and the younger Abijah; and they held their sittings in Beër-Sheba. But his sons walked not in his footsteps; for they turned aside after lucre and took bribes, and perverted justice. So the elders of Israel being assembled, went together unto Samuel at Ramah and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; wherefore, now, appoint thou a king for us as among the other nations, that he may judge us. This request displeased Samuel, and he prayed unto the Lord.

VII. SAUL IS PROCLAIMED KING.

A. M. 2882.

"God watcheth over the nations and over a single man, so that no hypocrite may govern, and that the people fall not into a snare."—JOB xxxiv. 29, 30.

THE Lord thereupon said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, and give them a king. Now, there lived at this time a man named Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. He had a son named Saul; not a man in Israel equalled him for beauty; he was higher by a whole head than any one of the people. One day Kish, having lost his she-asses, said to his son Saul, Take with thee one of our servants, and go in search of the asses. After having searched in vain over the mountains of Ephraim, and the land of Benjamin, they arrived at the city where Samuel dwelt. And Saul said to his servant, Let us return, lest my father may leave off caring for the asses and become uneasy on our account. The servant replied, Behold! there is in this city a man of God; let us go and consult him; perhaps he will point out to us the road we should take. Now, the Lord had appeared unto Samuel the day before the arrival of Saul, and said to him, Tomorrow about this time, I will send unto thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be ruler over Israel, that he may deliver my people out of the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked (with favour) on my people, because their complaint hath come up unto me. And when Samuel saw Saul, God made

him understand that he was the man of whom He had spoken. Samuel invited him to eat, and placed him in the seat of honour amongst his guests. The next day, Samuel took up a bottle of oil which he poured on the head of Saul; he then kissed him, and said to him, Behold, the Lord hath anointed thee to be ruler over his inheritance. Then Samuel convoked the people before the Lord at Mitzpeh, and presenting Saul to the whole assembly, he said, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? Then all the people made acclamations, and cried out, Long live the King! Samuel then explained to them the laws of royalty, and he wrote them in a book which he deposited before the Lord. He then dismissed the people, and every man returned to his home.

VIII. THE VICTORY OF SAUL OVER THE AMMONITES—ADDRESS OF SAMUEL TO THE PEOPLE.

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; soon or late, the wicked will not go unpunished."—PROV. xvi. 5.

ABOUT this time, Nachash the Ammonite went up against Jabesh Gilead and besieged it; and the inhabitants of Jabesh said unto Nachash, Enter into a treaty of alliance with us, and we will be subject to thee. But the Ammonite replied, On this condition will I make a treaty with you: if each one of you will consent to have his right eye put out, so that I may cast this as a reproach upon all Israel. And the elders of Jabesh then said unto him, Give us seven days' respite, that we may send

messengers through all the boundaries of Israel; and then if [in that time] there is no one to save us, we will come out to thee. Being arrived at Gibeah, the residence of Saul, the messengers related all these things unto the people, who all lifted up their voices and wept. But, behold! Saul was returning from the field with his oxen, and he said, What aileth the people that they weep thus? And they related to him the tidings of the men of Jabesh. Immediately after hearing these tidings, a divine spirit came over Saul, and he took a yoke of oxen, cut them in pieces, and sent them by messengers through all the land of Israel, saying, Thus shall be done unto the cattle of those who will not go forth to battle after Saul and Samuel. Now, the people, seized with the fear of the Lord, came forth as one man, and Saul assembled an army of three hundred and thirty thousand men. He divided them into three bodies, and marched against the Ammonites, whom he discomfited entirely. Then the people said unto Samuel, Who hath dared to say, Shall Saul reign over us? deliver unto us these men, that we may put them to death. But Saul replied, No man shall be put to death this day; for to-day the Lord hath given a victory unto Israel.

Then said Samuel unto the people, Come and let us go to Gilgal, and proclaim there anew the kingdom. And all the people went to Gilgal, and they there made Saul king before the Lord; and they there offered sacrifices of peace-offerings in honour of the Lord; after which Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced there exceedingly. Now Samuel said unto all Israel, Ye have acted wickedly towards the Lord in demanding for your-

selves a king; nevertheless, fear not, turn not from the Lord, but serve Him with all your heart. Turn not from Him; for ye would but follow vain things, which can neither aid nor save you, because they are vain. For the Lord will not forsake his people, on account of his great name, because it hath pleased Him to make you His people. Far be it from me also to sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; on the contrary, I will teach you the way which is good and right. Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things He hath done for you. If, however, ye commit evil, ye shall be consumed, both you and your king.

IX. SAUL BEATS THE PHILISTINES AND OTHER NEIGHBOURING PEOPLE—THE BRAVERY OF HIS SON JONATHAN.

"The wrath of a king is as messengers of death; but a wise man will pacify it."—PROV. xvi. 14.

THE Philistines had assembled against Israel a considerable army, chariots, horsemen, and a numerous host on foot. But Saul, who was encamped opposite to them, had but about six hundred men, the people having hidden themselves in caves or thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits, in fear of their numerous enemies. Now it came to pass one day that Jonathan, the son of Saul, said to his armour-bearer, Come, let us go over to the garrison of the Philistines, that is on the other side of the rock, peradventure the Lord will be favourable unto us; for nought can prevent Him from

granting a victory, by many or by few. And the armour-bearer replied, Do all that is in thy heart; I am ready to follow thee in all thou mayst desire. Jonathan then climbed up the rock, crawling on his hands and feet; and his armour-bearer after him, and Jonathan threw down all that were before him, and his armour-bearer slew after him. They thus killed about twenty men. Terror immediately spread over the camp, as well as the outposts. When the sentinels of Saul perceived this, they reported it to him. Then Saul advanced with the men that were with him. They came to the battle, and the Philistines were obliged to flee in great disorder. So the Lord granted on that day a complete victory to the Israelites over the Philistines; and Saul erected an altar in honour of the Lord. Nevertheless Saul wanted to slay Jonathan, because he had heard that the latter, exhausted with fatigue, had tasted a little honey in the forest, though Saul had enjoined on the people not to take any nourishment on that day. But the people said to Saul, What! shall Jonathan die, who hath procured us this great victory this day? Far be it! as sure as God liveth there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for with God's aid hath he wrought this day. Thus the people rescued Jonathan that he died not. Saul established his kingdom over Israel, and he fought against all his enemies on every side; and wherever he turned his arms, he spread terror and dismay. Thus were the Israelites delivered from the hands of their spoilers.

X. God commands Saul to exterminate the Amelekites—Saul executes not faithfully the commands of the Lord—Samuel announces to him his fall.

"But God is the judge: He putteth down one and lifteth up another."—Psalm lxxv. 8.

At this time Samuel said to Saul, Me did the Lord end to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel; ıow, therefore, hearken unto the voice of the words of he Lord. Thus saith the Lord Zebaoth, I remember hat which Amelek did to Israel, how he lay in wait for hem when they came up from Egypt: wherefore, go ow and smite Amelek, and utterly destroy all that beongeth unto him, and spare him not, but slay both man, oman, infant, and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ss. Saul then assembled the people together to the umber of two hundred and ten thousand men. Being ome to a town bordering on Amelek, he sent unto the enites, saying, Withdraw yourselves from the Amekites that I may not destroy you with them; yet ou showed kindness unto all the children of Israel hen they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites eparted from among the Amelekites: and Saul beat e Amelekites; he also took their king Agag alive, id utterly destroyed all the people by the sword. ut Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best the flocks and cattle, and delivered to destruc- on those things only which were of little value and ean in their eyes. Saul, on his return to Gilgal, said Samuel on seeing him, Blessed be thou of the Lord! ıave performed the command of the Lord. But Sa-

muel said unto him, What meaneth this bleating of the sheep, and lowing of the oxen which I hear? Saul answered him, The people have brought from Amelek the best of the sheep, and the fattest of the oxen, and have spared them to offer them as sacrifices in honour of the Lord thy God; but we have destroyed the rest. But Samuel replied, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold! TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE; AND TO ATTEND, MORE THAN THE FAT OF RAMS. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft; and stubbornness is as idolatry and image worship. Because thou hast despised the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king. And Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned, because I have transgressed the command of the Lord and thy words, because I feared the people, and hearkened unto their voice. But now, I pray thee, forgive me my sin, and return with me, that I may prostrate myself before the Lord. Samuel, however, refused, and wished to withdraw; but Saul held him by the skirt of his mantle, and it was rent. Then Samuel said, Thus hath the Lord rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it unto thy neighbour, who is better than thou. And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent. Saul replied, I have sinned; yet honour me now, I pray thee, in the presence of the elders of my people, and before Israel, and return with me, that I may prostrate myself before the Lord thy God. So Samuel returned with Saul, who humbled himself before the Lord. Samuel then made them bring out Agag before

him, and said to him, As thy hand hath deprived so many mothers of their children, so shall thy mother be deprived of her children among women. Samuel thereupon slew him. Then Samuel returned to Ramah, and Saul went to his residence at Gibeah, of Saul, (hill of Saul.)

XI. THE LORD COMMANDS SAMUEL TO ANOINT DAVID.

"The stone which the builders rejected, is become the chief corner stone."—PSALM cxviii. 22.

AND the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill thy horn with oil, and I will send thee unto Jesse, of Beth-lehem; for among his sons have I selected me a king. Samuel did as the Lord commanded him. And when Jesse presented the eldest of his sons before him, the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Jesse caused seven of his sons to appear before Samuel, who said unto him, The Lord hath not chosen these. Samuel then said, Are these all thy sons? But Jesse answered, There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep. Samuel said, Send for him, for we will not sit down till he cometh hither. And Jesse sent and brought him in, and he was ruddy, and he had fine eyes and a pleasing countenance; and the Lord said,

Arise, anoint him, for this is he (whom I have chosen). Samuel then took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. Immediately the divine spirit rested on David, and never left him from that day. Then Samuel returned unto Ramah. And the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, who was henceforth troubled with an evil spirit sent by the Lord. The servants of Saul then said unto him, Behold, now, an evil spirit of the Lord troubleth thee. Let our lord now command thy servants who are before thee, to seek out a man who is a skilful player on the harp; and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, that thou mayest be well. And Saul answered his servants, Look out for me a man who can play well, and bring him to me. One of the servants then answered and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse, of Beth-lehem, who is skilful in playing; besides, a valiant man, and a man of war; he is intelligent in general matters, and of a comely person, and the Lord is with him. Saul, therefore, sent messengers unto Jesse, saying, Send me David, thy son, who tendeth thy sheep. Jesse took an ass, which he loaded with bread, a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent the same to Saul by David, his son; and David came unto Saul, and entered into his service. And Saul loved him, and made him his armour-bearer. Saul also sent unto Jesse, saying, Permit David to remain near me; for he hath found favour in my sight. And henceforth, every time the evil spirit was upon Saul, David took the harp and played thereon. Thus Saul was relieved, and it did him good, and the evil spirit departed from him.

XII. DAVID KILLS THE GIANT GOLIATH.

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise glory in his wisdom; neither let the strong glory in his strength; nor the rich glory in his riches. But let him who will glorify himself, glory in this, in understanding and knowing that I am the Lord, who exercise mercy, justice, and righteousness, in all the earth."—JER. ix. 22, 23.

THE Philistines having again assembled their armies to renew the war, Saul gathered together the men of Israel, and encamped opposite the Philistines. The two armies were stationed opposite each other on two mountains which were separated by a valley. And a giant came forth from the camp of the Philistines; he was called Goliath of Gath, and he was seven cubits and a span in height. He had on his head a helmet of copper, and wore a coat-of-mail, which weighed five thousand shekels of copper: he had greaves of copper upon his legs, and he carried a spear, the handle of which was like a weaver's beam, and the iron of which weighed six hundred shekels. And his shield-bearer went before him. He stood in front of the army of Israel, and cried unto them, Why are ye come out to array yourselves in order of battle? am I not a Philistine, and are ye not servants of Saul? Choose yourselves a man from among you, and let him come down unto me: if he be able to fight with me and he should happen to kill me, then will we be servants unto you; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall ye be subject unto us and serve us. And this Philistine said, I this day defy all the hosts of Israel; give me a man, that we may fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard the words of the

Philistine, they were dismayed, and were greatly afraid. Now the three eldest sons of Jesse were then with Saul in the camp; but David sometimes left Saul to tend the flocks of his father at Beth-lehem. One day Jesse said to his son David, Take to thy brothers this ephah of parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp, to thy brothers, and carry these ten cheeses to the chief of their thousand. Inquire then after the welfare of thy brothers; and thou wilt bring me a testimony of their good conduct. David did as his father had commanded him, and having arrived at the camp inquired after the welfare of his brothers; and while he was talking with them, behold Goliath of Gath, the Philistine giant, came from the ranks of the enemy, and repeated his words (of provocation). David heard them, and he asked the men who were near him, What shall be done to the man who killeth this Philistine, and taketh away this reproach from Israel? For who is this idolatrous Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the Living God? The people said unto David, The King will load with riches him who will slay this Philistine; he will give him his daughter in marriage, and make his father's house free from all taxes in Israel. When his eldest brother Eliab heard what he had said to these men, he was incensed against David, and said to him, Wherefore art thou come down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the naughtiness of thy heart; for thou art come down only in order to see the battle. David replied, What have I done? is it not a very serious matter? Now, somebody reported the words of David unto Saul, who sent for him.

David said unto Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. But Saul said unto David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him, for thou art still but a youth, while he is a man bred to war from his youth. David then replied, Thy servant tended the sheep of his father, and there came at times a lion or a bear and bore away one of the lambs of the flock. I pursued him, I wrestled with him, and snatched his prey from his mouth; and when he turned against me, I caught him by the beard, and I smote him until he died. Thus thy servant hath killed both a lion and a bear, and this Philistine shall have the same fate as one of them, for having dared to insult the armies of the Living God. David then added, The Lord, who delivered me out of the power of the lion and out of the power of the bear, will deliver me also out of the power of this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Go, and may the Lord be with thee. And Saul armed David with his own armour, and put a helmet of brass upon his head, and put on him a coat of mail; and David girded on his sword over his armour, and essayed to walk with them, but he was not used thereto. And he said unto Saul, I cannot go with these, for I am not accustomed thereto; and he put them off. But he took his staff in his hand, and selected himself five smooth stones out of the brook, and he put them in his shepherd's bag which he wore; and with his sling in his hand, he advanced towards the Philistine. The latter, preceded by his shield-bearer, came forward and approached David. The Philistine, having looked about and observed David, disdained him (for he was a youth

of ruddy cheeks and of a fair countenance); and said to him, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with a stick? and he cursed David by his gods: And he said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the birds of the air, and to the beasts of the field. And David replied, Thou comest against me with a sword, with a spear, and with a lance; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Zebaoth, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day the Lord will deliver thee into my hand, and I will slay thee; I will cut off thy head, and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of heaven, and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that God is for Israel, and that all this assembly may learn that it is neither by the sword nor the spear that the Lord saveth; for the battle is the Lord's, and He will deliver you into our hands. And it came to pass as the Philistine advanced and was approaching David, that David ran rapidly towards him; and he put his hand in his bag and took thence a stone, which he put in his sling, slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead; and the stone sank deep into his forehead, and he fell to the ground. Then David ran and stood over the Philistine, took the sword of the latter and drew it out of its scabbard, and cut off his head therewith. The Philistines, seeing that their champion was dead, fled. Then the men of Israel and Judah arose, shouting and pursuing the Philistines to the edge of the valley, even to the gates of Ekron, so that the roads to Shaarayim, Gath, and Ekron were covered with the carcasses of the Philistines. After the defeat of the Philistines, Abner pre-

sented David before Saul; and David held the head of Goliath in his hand, which he brought to Jerusalem; but the arms of Goliath he deposited in his tent.

XIII. SAUL, JEALOUS OF DAVID'S GLORY, SEEKS TO PUT HIM TO DEATH — FRIENDSHIP OF JONATHAN AND DAVID—DAVID'S FLIGHT.

"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and provideth against it; but the fools pass on and are punished."—PROV. xxii. 3.

"Ever be attached to thy friend, and in adversity thou wilt find a brother in him."—PROV. xvii. 17.

FROM that day, Saul kept David near him, and would not permit him to return home any more. Jonathan became attached to David with all his soul, and loved him as himself. Jonathan took off his mantle and gave it unto David, as also his other garments, even to his sword, to his bow, and to his girdle. David went out against the Philistines to attack them by order of Saul, and was everywhere successful. So Saul placed him at the head of all his warriors; and David pleased the people as well as he did the servants of Saul. Now when they came along, as David returned after he had slain the Philistine, the women of all the cities of Israel came forth with singing and dancing, to meet Saul with tabrets and joy, and with instruments of music. And the women as they played, sang, alternately answering one the other, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth at this, and the saying displeased him, and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they

have ascribed but thousands! now what is wanting unto him but the kingdom?

From that day, Saul looked with an envious eye on David; and when Saul, by the divine will, was one day infected with the evil spirit, he raved about the house. David, as was customary with him, played then on the harp; and Saul, who had his javelin in his hand, threw it at David, saying, I will smite David even to the wall with it; but David avoided it twice. Then Saul feared David, for he saw that the Lord was with him, and had departed from himself (Saul). Therefore Saul removed him from about him, and made him a captain over a thousand; David was successful in all his undertakings, for the Lord was with him. Wherefore Saul seeing that David succeeded in everything he undertook, dreaded him still more. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he always went out and came in before them (i. e. led them to battle and brought them back). Now Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. Saul was informed thereof, and it pleased him; for he said to himself, I will give her to him that she may be a snare unto him, that by this means he may fall into the hands of the Philistines. So he recommended to his servants to say secretly unto David, Behold the King is well affected towards thee, and all his servants love thee; now therefore become the king's son-in-law. But David replied, Seemeth it to you a light thing to become the king's son-in-law? seeing that I am but a poor man and of little note? Saul, to whom his servants reported this reply, directed them to say, The king desireth not any other dowry than the token of the death of a hundred Philis-

tines, so that he may be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall into the hands of the Philistines. David, however, went out with his men, slew two hundred Philistines, and brought the token desired unto Saul, who then gave him his daughter Michal for a wife. Saul seeing clearly that the Lord was with David, dreaded him more and more, and became the enemy of David all his days. He spoke one time to Jonathan, and to all his servants, to slay David. But Jonathan warned David, and advised him to keep himself concealed. And Jonathan spoke unto his father in David's favour, saying, Let not the king commit a sinful act on his servant David, because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his deeds towards thee have been very good; for he did expose his life to the most imminent dangers, and he slew the Philistines, and the Lord granted through him a great victory unto all Israel. Thou sawest it and wast rejoiced with him; why wilt thou now sin by shedding innocent blood, in putting David to death without a cause? Saul thereupon yielded to the words of Jonathan, and swore by the existence of the Lord, that David should not be slain. Jonathan having called David, related to him all that had passed, and brought him back to Saul, and he remained in his presence as before. But war again broke out with the Philistines; and David went out against them and beat them so that they fled before him. One day Saul was again seized with the evil spirit, and David was playing the harp before him; Saul threw his javelin against David, who turned aside, so that the javelin stuck in the wall. Then David fled and escaped that very night.

Saul then sent messengers to the house of David, to watch him there, and to slay him the next morning. But his wife Michal, made him descend by the window, and he fled and escaped. He took refuge with Samuel, at Ramah; but as Saul pursued him there, he fled from Ramah. He had then a secret interview with Jonathan, who agreed upon a signal by which he should understand what were Saul's dispositions as regarded him. And Jonathan said unto him, Come three days hence, to the place where thou wast hidden on a former occasion; I will come there with my armour-bearer, and I will shoot three arrows, on the side thereof, as though I were shooting at a mark. And, behold, I will send the lad, saying, Go find out the arrows. If I now say unto the lad, Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee, then take hold of him and come, for it shall be a sign of peace unto thee, and that there is no farther danger, as the Lord liveth. But if I say thus unto the young man, Behold, the arrows are beyond thee, then go thy way, for the Lord hath sent thee away. And as regardeth the matter which thou and I have spoken of, behold, the Lord be [a witness] between thee and me for ever. So David hid himself in the field. Jonathan being at table with his father, spoke in favour of David; but Saul inflamed with anger against Jonathan, said to him, Perverse and rebellious son! Do I not know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse, to thy shame, and the shame of thy mother? For so long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the earth, there will be no stability for thee or thy throne. Wherefore now send for and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die. But Jonathan replied, Why

shall he die? What hath he done? Saul thereupon cast his javelin at Jonathan, to slay him, and he was therefore convinced that his father had resolved to slay David. He then rose from table in anger, and ate nothing all day, for he was grieved for David. The next morning he went to the field with a little boy, and gave David the signal agreed upon, and then sent the boy back. As soon as he was gone, David came from his hiding-place, and they embraced each other, and wept together: David particularly wept bitterly. Jonathan then said to David, Depart in peace; as to what we have sworn by the name of the Lord, it shall be between me and thee, and between my posterity and thine for ever.

XIV. FLIGHT OF DAVID TO NOB—SAUL, INFORMED BY DOEG, CAUSES THE PRIEST, ACHIMELECH, WITH ALL HIS FAMILY, AND ALL THE INHABITANTS OF NOB, TO BE PUT TO DEATH.

"The words of the wicked are a snare to shed blood."—PROV. xii. 6.

"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn."—PROV. xxix. 2.

DAVID fled to Nob, to Achimelech the priest, who hastened to meet him, and said to him, Why art thou alone, and no man is with thee? And David replied, The King hath charged me with a secret mission, and I have appointed my servants to meet me at such and such a place, as I have directed them. And now hast thou no provisions to give me? were it but five loaves, or whatever else thou mayst have. The priest replied, I have no common bread under my hand, but

there is hallowed bread, if thy men have not defiled themselves. And David said to him, Our vessels are commonly pure, even for what may be profane, much more for what is holy. As there was no other bread but the shew-bread, which they were removing from the table of shew-bread of the Lord, the priest gave it to him. And Doeg, an Idumite, the chief of the herdsmen of King Saul, happened to be there at the time. David said also to Achimelech, Hast thou not also under thy care a spear or a sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor any weapons with me, because the king's business required haste. And the priest replied, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou didst slay in the valley of Elah, is wrapped up in a cloth, behind the ephod; if thou wilt, thou mayest take it, for there is no other save that here. David then said unto him, There is none like that; give it me. Then David fled thence, and went to Achish, the King of Gath. And the servants of Achish said to their master, Is not this David, the most distinguished man of his country? Did they not sing of him in their triumphal song, in the dances, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? David was struck with these words, and fearing Achish, he feigned madness; he scribbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle run down upon his beard; so that Achish said unto his servants, See ye not clearly that this man is mad? wherefore, then, have ye brought him to me? have I need of madmen, that ye have brought him to commit his follies in my presence? Should such a one be permitted to enter my house? David, therefore, departed thence, and escaped to the cave of Adul-

lam. His brothers, and all his father's house, having learnt where he was, went down thither to him. And all sorts of unfortunate men, men in debt, or discontented, to the number of about four hundred, gathered themselves unto him, and he became their chief. He went from there to Mitzpeh-Moab, and said to the King of Moab, Let my father and mother dwell with you until I know what God will do for me. He brought then his parents before the King of Moab, near whom they remained all the time that David was in the stronghold. Now Doeg reported to Saul that David had been at Nob, saying, that the priest Achimelech had inquired of the Lord for him, and that he had given David provisions, and the sword of Goliath, the Philistine. The King, thereupon sent, and commanded the priest Achimelech, with all his father's house, the priests who were at Nob, to appear before him; and they all came before the King. Then Saul said, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse? that thou hast given him bread and a sword, and thou hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait against me, as is clearly proven? But Achimelech answered, Who, among all thy servants, is so faithful as David, who is the King's son-in-law? he who obeyeth thy least bidding, and who is the most honourable in thy house? Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? far be this from thy servant. Let not the King impute anything unto his servant, and to all the house of my father; for thy servant knew nothing of all this, be it little or much. But the King said, Thou shalt die, Achimelech, thou and all thy father's house. And he immediately ordered the runners who

stood about him, Turn and slay the priests of the Lord, because they also side with David. But the servants of the King would not put forth their hands to fall upon the priests of the Lord. Then the King said to Doeg, Turn thou and fall upon these priests. And Doeg, the Idumite, turned and fell upon the priests, and slew on that day eighty-five persons that wore a linen ephod. Saul also sacked Nob, the city of the priests, and smote with the edge of the sword, men, women, children, and sucklings, and even asses and sheep. But one of the sons of Achimelech, Abiathar by name, escaped from the slaughter, and fled to David, to whom he related all that Saul had done to the priests of the Lord. And David then said, I knew well, on that day when Doeg, the Idumean, was there, that he would surely report it to Saul. I have been the cause of the death of all the persons of thy family. Remain now with me; fear nought; for he that seeketh my life, seeketh thy life; but with me thou shalt be in safeguard.

XV. GENEROUS CONDUCT OF DAVID IN REGARD TO SAUL —DEATH OF SAMUEL.

"Say not, I will return the evil done unto me; hope in the Lord, and He will help thee."—PROV. xx. 22.

JONATHAN, the son of Saul, having gone to see David, who was in the desert of Zif, strengthened him in his confidence in God, and said, Fear not, for the hand of Saul, my father, shall not reach thee; and thou shalt one day be king over Israel, and I shall be the next in dignity unto thee; and also my father, Saul, himself

well knoweth this. And they two renewed their covenant before the Lord, and David remained in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house. About the same time, Saul was informed that David was in the desert of Engedi. Saul, with three thousand chosen men, set out immediately in search of David and his followers. Having arrived near some sheep-cotes, he entered into a cavern to repose. Now, David and his men were concealed in the sides of the cave. And these said unto David, This is the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold I deliver thy enemy into thy hand, and do thou with him as it may seem good in thy eyes. Then David arose, and without being perceived, he cut off the skirt of Saul's robe. And afterwards his heart smote him because he had cut off the skirt of Saul. And he said to his men, The Lord preserve me from doing this thing against my master, the anointed of the Lord, to stretch forth my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the Lord. And David quieted his men with these words, and did not permit them to rise against Saul, who afterwards left the cave and went his way. And David came forth from the cave, and cried out after him, My lord, the king! Saul having turned round, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself down before him, and then said, Wherefore hearest thou the words of men who say, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thy own eyes have seen that the Lord had delivered thee to-day into my hand in the cave, and some one spoke of slaying thee, but I spared thee, and I said, I will not put forth my hand against my master, because he is the Lord's anointed. Moreover, O my

father! see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand; since I have cut that off and have not slain thee, acknowledge thou, and see that I have neither evil nor criminal intention, and that I have not sinned against thee; yet thou seekest to take my life. May the Lord judge between me and thee, and let Him avenge me of thee; but my hand shall not be raised against thee. When David had ceased speaking, Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? then he raised his voice and wept. And he continued and said to David, Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast done me good, whilst I have rewarded thee with evil. And thou hast made known this day, that thou hast done good unto me, that though the Lord had delivered me into thy hand, thou didst not slay me. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go unharmed? Wherefore, may the Lord reward thee for the good that thou hast done unto me this day. And now, behold, I know thou shalt surely become king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy power; swear now, therefore, unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not destroy my posterity after me, and that thou wilt not cut off my name out of my father's house. So David swore unto Saul, who then returned home, and David and his men retired to the stronghold of En-gedi. At this time Samuel died, and all Israel gathered together and mourned for him, and they interred him in the place of his habitation at Ramah.

Some time after this, Saul, being informed that David was concealed in the hill at Chachila, went out against him once more with three thousand men. David, learn-

ing that Saul pursued him anew, retired into the desert. One night, Saul was asleep in the ring, and his spear was stuck in the ground by his side. Abner, his general, and all his men, were sleeping around him. David, knowing the place where Saul slept, said to his men, Who will go down with me to Saul, into the camp? When Abishai, the son of Zerujah, replied, I will go down with thee. So David and Abishai went during the night, and penetrated through the people of Saul. And Abishai said, This day hath the Lord delivered thy enemy into thy hand; now let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear at once, even unto the earth, and I will not repeat the blow. But David said to Abishai, Destroy him not, for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed; but, I pray thee, take only the spear, which is by his head, and the jar of water, and let us go. Thus David took away the spear and the jar of water from near where the head of Saul rested, and they went on their way without being discovered, for no one awoke, because a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them. When David had come to the other side, he stopt at some distance on the top of the mountain, and cried out to the men of Saul, and to Abner, the son of Ner, Wilt thou not answer, Abner? And he replied, Who art thou, that thou criest to the King? And David said to Abner, Art thou not a valiant man? and who is like unto thee in Israel? Wherefore, then, hast thou not kept guard over thy lord the King? for there came one of the people to destroy the King thy lord. This thing which

thou hast done is not good. As the Lord liveth, ye are deserving to die, since ye have not kept guard over your master, the Lord's anointed. And now, see where are the King's spear, and the jar of water which were by his head? And Saul recognised David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And the latter replied, It is my voice, my lord, O King. And David added, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in my hand? Now, therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the King hearken to the words of his servant, If the Lord hath stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering; but if they are the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day from joining myself to the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go serve other gods. And now, let not my blood be shed on the earth before the face of the Lord, since the King of Israel is come out to seek a flea, pursuing me as one hunteth a partridge on the mountains. Then answered Saul, I have sinned; return, O my son David, for I will no more do thee harm, seeing that my life hath been precious in thy eyes this day. Yes, I have acted foolishly, and have erred exceedingly. But David answered and said, Behold, here is the King's spear, and let one of the young men come over and fetch it. But the Lord will render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the Lord delivered thee into my hand this day, and I would not stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed. And, behold, as thy life was highly prized this day in my eyes, so may my life be highly prized in the eyes of the Lord; and may He deliver me from all tribulation.

Saul then said unto David, Blessed be thou, my son David; thou wilt do great things, and wilt also prevail. David then went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.

XVI. SAUL CONSULTS A PRETENDED PROPHETESS—DEATH OF SAUL AND HIS SONS.

"Whoso returneth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house."—PROV. xvii. 13.

AT this time the Philistines again assembled to make war against Israel, and pitched their camp at Shunem, and Saul and the Israelites encamped at Gilboa. When Saul saw the hosts of the Philistines, he was seized with fear, and his heart was greatly troubled. He then inquired of the Lord, but the Lord answered him not; neither in dreams, nor by the response of the priests, nor by the prophets. He then caused himself to be led by two of his men to the house of a woman, a pretended consulter of the dead, at Endor, where he arrived during the night. This woman having asked him whom he wanted to appear before him, he said, Bring me up Samuel. When the apparition of Samuel had come up, Saul said to him, I am sorely distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God hath departed from me, and answereth me no more, either by the prophets or through dreams; therefore have I called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Samuel then announced to him that the Lord would deliver Israel into the hands of the Philistines, and that he and his sons should perish to-morrow. When Saul heard this, he

fell suddenly full length to the earth, and was sorely afraid because of the words of Samuel; and there was, besides, no strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all that day and night. The woman prayed him to eat, so that, as she said, he might recover his strength and pursue his journey; but he refused. However, as his servants and the woman pressed him, he yielded to their wishes; so he arose from the earth, and sat on the bed. The woman now had a fat calf, which she hastened to kill; and she baked unleavened cakes, and she brought it before Saul and his servants, and they did eat. They then arose and went away the same night. Now, the Philistines having gathered all their forces at Aphek, attacked Israel, who were routed and put to flight. The Philistines pursued after Saul and his sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malkishua; and they came up to these latter and slew them. And the battle was hard against Saul, and the archers came up with him, and he was in a great fear on account of them. Then Saul said to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword and run me through, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and abuse me; but the armour-bearer would not, because he was greatly afraid. Saul, therefore, took his sword and fell upon it. When the armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell upon his sword and died with him. When the Philistines came on the morrow to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. And they cut off Saul's head, stripped off his armour, and sent them in all the land of the Philistines round about, to announce the event in the temples of their idols, and to the people.

They deposited his arms in the temple of Ashtaroth, and fastened his body and those of his sons on the walls of Beth-Shan. And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard how the Philistines had acted with regard to Saul, all those who were able to carry arms, rose and marched through all the night; and they carried away the bodies of Saul and his sons from the walls of Beth-Shan, and brought them to Jabesh, and there burnt them. They afterwards gathered the bones, and buried them in the grove near Jabesh, and they fasted seven days.

XVII. DAVID MOURNS FOR SAUL AND JONATHAN—HE IS ANOINTED AT HEBRON — ISH-BOSHET, THE SON OF SAUL.

"Rejoice not when thy enemy falleth."—PROV. xxiv. 17.

AFTER the death of Saul, David remained for two days at Ziklag, whither he had returned after having beaten the Amalekites, who had seized, in his absence, that city, where he usually dwelt, and which had been assigned to him by Achish, King of the Philistines. The third day, a man, arriving from the camp, announced to him the death of Saul and Jonathan. David, and those who were with him, tore their garments; they wept and fasted till evening in memory of Saul and Jonathan, and in memorial of those of the people of the Lord, and of the house of Israel, who had fallen by the sword. And David composed a lament over Saul and Jonathan. Afterwards he went with his two wives, Achinoam, of Jezreel, and Abigail, the Carmelite, and all his men, to Hebron. The men of Judah then came

there and anointed David king over the house of Judah. When it was made known to him how the men of Jabesh had buried Saul, he sent messengers to them saying, Be ye blessed of the Lord, that ye have shown kindness unto your lord, to Saul, and have buried him. And now, may the Lord show you kindness and truth, and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Now, let your hands be strong, and be ye valiant men, though your lord, Saul, be dead; and the house of Judah also have anointed me King over them. Nevertheless, Abner, the chief of the army of Saul, had conducted Ish-boshet, the son of Saul, to Machnayim, and had there proclaimed him King over Benjamin and over all Israel. But the house of Judah followed David.

XVIII. DEATH OF ABNER AND ISH-BOSHET—ALL THE PEOPLE ACKNOWLEDGE DAVID FOR KING.

"Mercy and truth preserve the king; and his throne is upholden by mercy."—PROV. xx. 28.

ABNER and the men of Ish-boshet made war against David; several bloody battles ensued; but the followers of David were always conquerors; and in one of their encounters, that near the pool at Gibeon, Asahel, brother of Joab and Abishai, was slain by Abner. After some time, Abner being insulted by Ish-boshet, sent to announce to David, that he wished to make a treaty with him, and to bring all Israel under the dominion of David. But David replied, I agree to make a treaty with thee; but only on condition that thou bringest back unto me my wife Michal, the daughter of Saul, when

thou comest to see my face. David likewise sent messengers to this effect to Ish-boshet, who sent Michal back to him. Abner then went with twenty men to Hebron, to David, who made a feast for him. After which Abner said unto David, I will now arise and go, and will gather all Israel to my lord and king, so that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayst reign over all that thy heart desireth. So David dismissed Abner, who went his way in peace. But Joab, the chief of the army of David, who had just returned from an expedition, having learnt that David had allowed Abner to depart in safety, said unto the king, What hast thou done? Behold Abner came unto thee; why hast thou sent him away and see that he is gone? Thou knowest Abner, the son of Ner, that he came but to deceive thee, to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou art doing. Joab then left David, and sent messengers after Abner, who brought him back unknown to David.

When Abner had returned to Hebron, Joab drew him aside near the gate of the city, and slew him, to revenge the death of his brother Asahel, whom Abner had killed at the battle of Gibeon. When David heard what had taken place, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the Lord, of the blood of Abner the son of Ner; may this blood rest on Joab and on his father's house. Then David said unto Joab and to all the people who were with him, Rend your garments; cover yourselves with sackcloth and mourn before Abner. King David himself walked after the bier; and they buried Abner in Hebron. The King, and all the people, wept over his

grave. And all the people came to cause David to eat bread while it was yet day; but he swore and said, So do God unto me, and yet more, if I taste bread or aught else till the sun hath set. And every one perceived thus with satisfaction, that the king had had no part in the slaying of Abner.

Ish-boshet had in his service two captains, named Baana and Rechab. One very warm day at noon, when Ish-boshet was lying on his bed, these two men entered his house and slew him; and they carried his head to David, to whom they said, Behold the head of Ish-boshet, the son of Saul, thy enemy, who sought to take thy life! The Lord hath avenged our lord the king this day of Saul and all his race. But David answered them, As the Lord liveth, who hath delivered me from all adversity, that when one told me saying, Behold Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would give him a reward for his tidings, how much more when wicked men have slain an innocent man in his own house upon his bed? Shall I then not require now his blood of your hand, and take you away from the face of the earth? And immediately David called his young men, and ordered them to be put to death. They cut off their hands and feet, and then hanged them near the pool at Hebron; and David caused the head of Ish-boshet to be buried in the sepulchre of Abner in Hebron. Afterwards all the elders of Israel appeared before David at Hebron, and he entered into a league with them before the Lord, and they anointed him king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and

he reigned forty years; namely, seven years over Judah, at Hebron, and thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah at Jerusalem.

XIX. DAVID CAUSES THE HOLY ARK TO BE BROUGHT TO HIS DWELLING—DIVINE MESSAGE OF THE PROPHET NATHAN.

"Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright. Praise the Lord with the harp; sing unto him with the psaltery and a ten-stringed instrument."—PSALM xxxiii. 1, 2.

AFTER these events, David assembled all the chosen men of Israel, to remove the holy ark which was at Gibeah, at the house of Aminadab, to his city. They accordingly removed the ark of God from the house of Aminadab; and David and all the house of Israel played on all sorts of instruments before the Lord. When they had arrived near the threshing-floor of Nachon, Uzzah stretched forth his hand to the ark, and laid hold thereof, for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him there for his error, that he died there near the ark of God. David, being afraid of the Lord, said, How shall the ark of the Lord come to me? And he no longer desired to remove the ark unto him into the city of David, but had it deposited in the house of Obed-Edom, the Gittite. After the ark had remained three months in the house of Obed-Edom, David was informed that the Lord had blessed the house of Obed-Edom, and all that appertained unto him, on account of the ark of God; then David went

and brought up the ark of God to the city of David with gladness. And every time those who bore the ark had gone six steps, he sacrificed a bullock and a fatted ram. David himself, clothed in a linen ephod, danced with all his might before the Lord. Thus was it that David and all Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with joyous shouting and with the sound of the trumpet. Michal, who was looking out of the window, saw King David leaping and dancing before the ark of the Lord, and she despised him in her heart. When the ark of the Lord had been deposited in its place in a tent which David had caused to be pitched for it, he offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the Lord. Then he blessed the people in the name of the Lord, and caused to be distributed to all the multitude of Israel, both to men and women, one loaf to each, a piece of meat, and a flagon of wine: after which the people departed every one to his house. When David then went in to bless his household, Michal, the daughter of Saul, came to meet him, and said, How glorious was this day the king of Israel, who hath shown himself before the handmaids of his servants as any one of the lowest men could have shown himself. But David said unto Michal, It was before the Lord who hath chosen me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me as ruler over the people of the Lord, even Israel. I have thus played before the Lord. And had I abased myself still more, and had I appeared still less in my own eyes, I should be nevertheless honoured in the eyes of those handmaids of whom thou speakest. But Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child up to the day of her death.

Now, when the King was peaceably established in his government, and the Lord had given him peace in delivering him on all sides from his enemies, he one day said unto the prophet Nathan, Behold, now I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the Lord dwelleth in a tent. And Nathan answered the King, Go and do all that is in thy heart; for the Lord is with thee. But the same night the word of the Lord manifested itself unto Nathan, saying, Go and say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, It is not thou who shalt build a house in honour of my name; but thy son, whom I will place after thee on thy throne, shall build a house for my name. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever; I will be a father unto him, and he shall be unto me a son; and the prophet was farther told to predict to David the everlasting mercy of the Lord. When David heard these words, which the prophet repeated to him, he returned thanks unto the Lord, and said, O Lord Eternal, thou art God, and thy words must be proved true, as thou hast promised this good to thy servant; may it then be thy pleasure to bless the house of thy servant, so that it may continue for ever before Thee; for thou, O Lord, hast spoken, and by thy blessing only let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.

XX. MEPHIBOSHETH, THE SON OF JONATHAN, IS SENT FOR BY DAVID, WHO RESTORES TO HIM ALL THE POSSESSIONS OF SAUL—DAVID COMMITS A GREAT CRIME—THE PROPHET NATHAN PREDICTS HIS PUNISHMENT.

"Thy own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not."—PROV. xxvii. 10.

"He who concealeth his transgressions, shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy."—PROV. xxviii. 13.

THE Lord favoured David in all his undertakings; and David reigned over all Israel, and exercised justice and righteousness towards his people. One day he asked, Is there yet any that is left of the family of Saul, that I may show him kindness for the sake of Jonathan? Now there happened to be a servant of the household of Saul, whose name was Ziba, and he was brought before David; and Ziba informed the King, that there yet existed a son of Jonathan, named Mephibosheth, who was at the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar. The King then sent for him from the place where he resided, and Mephibosheth appeared before David and fell on his face and bowed himself before him. David then said unto him, Fear nothing, for I will show thee kindness for the sake of thy father, Jonathan; and I will restore to thee all the land of thy grandfather, Saul, and thou shalt eat continually at my table. The King then sent to call Ziba, and said to him, I have given unto thy master's son, all that appertaineth to Saul and to all his household. Therefore, thou, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall cultivate the land for him, and thou shalt gather in the

harvest, wherewith thy master's son may maintain himself. As to Mephibosheth himself, he will eat at my table, as one of the King's sons. And Ziba replied, According to all that my lord the King hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. So Mephibosheth remained in Jerusalem, and all of the house of Ziba were servants unto him.

Nevertheless, David became guilty of a very great sin; he took the wife of Uriah, and caused him to perish on the field of battle against the Ammonites, where he had ordered him to be stationed in the most perilous post, in order that he might meet his death. This act greatly displeased the Lord, who sent the prophet Nathan unto David. The former appeared before the King, and said unto him, There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceedingly many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and had nourished up; and it grew up together with him and with his children, it did eat of his own bread, and drink of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, who being not willing to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to prepare for the wayfaring man that had come unto him, took away the poor man's lamb, and made a feast therewith for the man who had come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and said unto Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this shall surely die; and he shall pay fourfold for the sheep, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. Then Nathan said unto David,

Thou art the man! Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I anointed thee as King over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and I gave thee the house of Israel, and of Judah; and if that would have been too little, I would have added thereto more and more yet; wherefore, then, hast thou despised the command of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah, the Hittite, with the sword, and after thou hadst slain him with the sword of the sons of Ammon, thou hast taken his wife to be thy wife. Wherefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me and hast taken the wife of Uriah, the Hittite, for thy wife. Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house; thou hast acted in secret; but as for me, I will fulfil this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. But because by this act thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme against Him, the child that is born unto thee shall surely die. Nathan thereupon returned unto his house. Soon after, the Lord struck the child, which the wife of Uriah had borne unto David, and it was dangerously sick. But David implored the Lord to spare the child; he fasted, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house went in to raise him up from the earth, but he would not, nor did he eat anything with them. On the seventh day the child died, and his servants feared to tell him that the child was dead; for they said one to

another, Behold, while the child yet lived, we spoke unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice; how then shall we say to him that the child is dead? he might do himself some mischief. But David, noticing that his servants were whispering among themselves, perceived that the child was dead; therefore he said, Is the child dead? and they answered, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, washed, and anointed himself, changed his garments, and went unto the house of the Lord, and prostrated himself there. He then returned unto his house, and having required food, they set it before him, and he ate. His servants then said unto him, What meaneth this thing which thou hast done? For the child, while it was yet alive, thou didst fast and weep; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread? But he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, Who knoweth, but the Lord may be gracious unto me, that the child may live? But now he is dead; wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me. David then comforted his wife Bethsheba. She bore him another son, whom he named Solomon, and the Lord loved him.

XXI. REVOLT OF ABSALOM—FLIGHT OF DAVID—HIS RESIGNATION IN ADVERSITY.

"He that supplanteth his father and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach."—Prov. xix. 26.

Absalom, the son of David, was the handsomest man

in all Israel; he went forth in a chariot preceded by fifty runners. Absalom frequently stopped on the side of the road which led to the gate of the city, and when any one that had a controversy was going to appear before the King to seek justice, he would call him, ask him from what town he came, and what brought him to the capital; then would he say unto him, Thy words are good and right, but there is no one who will hear thee on the King's part; and he signified that if he were made a judge in the land, he would render justice to all parties. If any one drew nigh, and saluted him, he gave him his hand, and took him and kissed him. Thus did he act towards all the people of Israel, until he had captivated their hearts. One day, by consent of his father, he set out for Hebron, under the pretext of fulfilling a vow which he had made to the Lord. Two hundred men whom he had invited, and who were ignorant of his schemes, set out with him from Jerusalem, and accompanied him in the innocence of their heart. Absalom then sent emissaries through all the tribes of Israel, saying unto them, As soon as ye shall hear the sound of the cornet, then shall ye say, Absalom hath become king in Hebron. He sent also to call Achitophel, the Gilonite, David's counsellor; and very soon after, the conspiracy became powerful, for the people around Absalom continually increased in numbers. When the King was informed that the hearts of the people were with Absalom, he said to all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee, for we shall not else escape from Absalom; make speed to depart, for fear that he should overtake us suddenly here, and bring evil upon us, and

THE

JEWISH MISCELLANY.

Nos. V., XI., and XIV.

מסלת ישראל

THE PATH OF ISRAEL,

OR

ABRIDGMENT OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES:

FOR THE USE OF

THE YOUTH OF OUR NATION.

BY J. ENNERY,

OF STRASBURG.

REVISED AND CORRECTED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

יבש חציר נבל ציץ ודבר אלהינו יקום לעולם׃

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever."—Isaiah xl. 8.

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smite the city with the edge of the sword. The king then departed with his servants, also six hundred men, who had followed him from Gath, went out with him. All the people, who were near, where the king passed by, wept bitterly at seeing him thus, fleeing before Absalom. The priests Zadok and Abiathar, as also all the Levites, bearing the ark of the covenant, accompanied David. But the king said to Zadok, Carry back the ark of God to the city; if I find grace in the eyes of the Lord, He will bring me back, and permit me to see it again and his dwelling; but if He should say, I have no pleasure in thee, I am resigned; let Him do unto me as appeareth best in his eyes. The king then continued, Behold, I shall remain in the desert, till I hear from you what passeth in the city. Zadok and Abiathar thereupon carried back the ark of God unto Jerusalem, and remained there. But David ascended, weeping, the Mount of Olives with his head covered and walking barefoot, and all the people who were with him covered their heads and ascended the mount weeping.

It was then that David, having heard that Achitophel was among the conspirators, said, Frustrate, O Lord, I pray thee, the advice of Achitophel. And when he had arrived at the top of the mount, where he was accustomed to prostrate himself before God, Hushai, the Arkite, came to meet him, with his coat rent, and earth upon his head. But David said to him, If thou shouldst come with me, thou wouldst be a burden unto me; but, if thou wouldst return to the city, and present thyself there to Absalom, and apparently submit to him, thou mayest, perhaps, be able to frustrate for me, the

counsels of Achitophel. Thou wilt find there the priests Zadok and Abiathar, and whatever thou hearest from the king's house, tell to them, and send me word concerning everything, through their sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan. Thereupon Hushai, David's friend, went into the city, where he arrived, as Absalom made his entry into Jerusalem.

David had just passed the top of the mountain, when Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, came towards him, with two saddled asses laden with bread, wine, and fruits. The king then said to Ziba, What meanest thou with these? And Ziba said, The asses are for the king's household to ride on; the bread and fruits, for the young men to eat, and the wine to drink, for those who may become faint in the desert. The king asked, Where is then thy master's son? And Ziba replied, He remaineth at Jerusalem; for, he said, The house of Israel will, this day, restore me the kingdom of my father. Then said the king to Ziba, I give thee all that belongeth to Mephibosheth; and Ziba replied, I am devoted to thee; I desire only to find grace in thy eyes, my lord and king.

When David arrived near Bachurim, a man named Shimi, of the family of Saul, came forward, followed him, abusing him, and throwing stones at the king and his followers. Abishai, Joab's brother, then said unto the king, Why shall this dead dog curse my lord, the king? let me go and take off his head. But the king said, Why trouble you yourselves for me, ye sons of Zeruiah? Let him curse; because, the Lord hath, without doubt, inspired him to curse David. Who shall then

dare say unto him, Why hast thou done so? Then he added, Behold, my own son seeketh to take my life; what may not a Benjamite (a relative of Saul) then do? Let him alone and let him curse; for the Lord hath no doubt inspired him. Peradventure, the Lord will look on my affliction, and will return me good for his cursing, which I have this day received. The king afterwards reached Bachurim, with all his followers; they were fatigued, and refreshed themselves there.

XXII. HUSHAI DEFEATS THE PLAN OF ACHITOPHEL TO SURPRISE DAVID—DEATH OF ABSALOM.

"The ravens of the valley shall pick out, and the young eagles eat, the eye of him who insulteth his father, and despiseth the wrinkles of his mother."—PROV. xxx. 17.

ABSALOM and his adherents had now entered Jerusalem. Hushai, David's friend, presenteth himself before Absalom, and said to him, Long live the king! And Absalom said to him, Is this thy gratitude to thy friend? Why hast thou not gone with thy friend? But Hushai said, I desire to remain with him, whom the Lord and all Israel have chosen. Beside, is it not his son whom I follow? I will be as submissive to thee, as I was unto thy father. Now Achitophel said unto Absalom, Let me select twelve thousand men, and I will pursue David this night, and I will surprise him, whilst he is weary and weak-handed; the men who are with him will flee, and I will smite the king only. This plan pleased Absalom, and all the elders of Israel; nevertheless, he said, Call

Hushai the Arkite, and let us ask also his counsel. The latter advised Absalom to assemble all Israel, and to put himself at their head, in order to overcome David completely, and that not one of the men who follow him might escape. Absalom and all Israel thought the advice of Hushai preferable to that of Achithophel, for the Lord had resolved to destroy the good advice of Achitophel; since He had determined to bring evil on Absalom. Hushai sent immediately and told the priests, Zadok and Abiathar, how he and Achitophel had counselled; and they immediately sent word to David by their sons, that he should not remain that night at the crossing in the wilderness, but to pass at once over the Jordan. David and his men then passed over the Jordan and went to Machanayim. Perceiving that his counsel was not followed, Achitophel mounted his ass, returned home; and, after having regulated his household affairs, he strangled himself, and was interred in the sepulchre of his fathers.

On David's arrival at Machanayim, Shobi, Machir, and Barzilai the Gileadite, brought them beds, furniture, earthen vessels, wheat, barley, flour, and parched corn, vegetables, honey, butter, cheese, and sheep; for they said, These people must be tired, hungry, and thirsty, in the wilderness.

Absalom, having passed the Jordan, encamped in the country of Gilead. David, after reviewing the men who were with him, set over them chiefs of thousands and of hundreds, and divided them into three bodies. When the king announced to them that he would go with them, the people said unto him, Thou shalt not go forth with us; it is better that thou remain in the city and be in a

situation to succour us from there. The king replied, I will do what seemeth best to you. He then placed himself by the gate, and the people went forth by hundreds, and by thousands. The king ordered to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai, his generals, to act leniently towards Absalom. All the people heard the king giving this in charge to his chiefs touching Absalom. The army then advanced against Israel into the field, and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. The people of Israel were overcome by the followers of David. The slaughter was great, for twenty thousand men perished that day. The battle then spread over all the country, and more died through the beasts of the forest than had been slain by the sword. Absalom found himself suddenly in the presence of David's followers, and he was mounted on a mule, and in passing under the thick boughs of a great oak, his head became entangled in the branches; he remained hanging by his hair, and the mule escaped from under him. A man, having perceived this, reported it to Joab, saying, I have seen Absalom hanging by an oak. Joab ran, took three darts, which he plunged into Absalom's heart, who was hanging yet alive on the oak. He caused him to be slain afterwards by his armour-bearers, who surrounded Absalom, and put him to death. Immediately Joab caused the trumpet to be sounded, and stopt the pursuit after Israel. And they took Absalom and threw him into a great pit in the forest, and they placed over him a great heap of stones, and all Israel fled, every one to his tent. When the king received the news of his son's death he was sorely grieved, and wept, crying, O Absalom, my son! O my son Absalom! O

that I had died instead of thee! O my son! my son! Thus was the victory of the day changed into mourning unto all the people, who returned noiselessly into the town, as if they had been a vanquished army and flying from battle. Afterwards the king commenced his journey to return to Jerusalem; and when he had passed again over the Jordan, a great multitude of the men of Judah and Benjamin came to meet him, and among them was Shimi of Bachurim. He threw himself on his knees before the king, and besought him to forgive the offence of which he had been guilty. Then Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, said, What, doth not he deserve death, because he hath cursed the anointed of the Lord? But David said, What have I to do with you, sons of Zeruiah? shall there be put to death a man in Israel this day? for do I not feel this day that I have again become king over Israel? Then the king said to Shimi, thou shalt not die; and he swore it unto him. Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul, also appeared before David; he had lived in mourning since the king's departure. David said unto him, Why didst thou not follow me, Mephibosheth? and he replied, My lord and king, my servant deceived me, I said unto him, Let my ass be saddled, that I may follow the king, for I am lame. But he hath slandered me before my lord and king; yet thou art as an angel of God, do with me as thou pleasest. For were not all the members of the house of my father as men deserving death unto my lord the king? nevertheless, hast thou made me eat at thy table; what right have I then to complain more unto the king? But the king said to him, What booteth it to say more? I have decided, thou

shalt divide the land with Ziba. Mephibosheth replied, Let him keep it all, since my lord and king hath returned in peace unto his own house. Barzilai, the Gileadite, also had accompanied the king over the Jordan, to go with him to Jerusalem. He had maintained the king, during his sojourn at Machanayim, for he was a very wealthy man. The king said to him, Come with me, and I will keep thee with me in Jerusalem. But Barzilai replied to the king, I am now fourscore years old; am I yet able to distinguish between the good and the bad? wherefore shall thy servant be yet a charge unto my lord the king? Permit thy servant to return, that I may die in my own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and my mother. But here is my son Kimham, let him go with my lord the king, and do thou unto him all that seemest good unto thee. The king said, Let Kimham accompany me, and I will do unto him all that may best please thee; and all which thou shalt desire of me I will do for him. The king then kissed Barzilai and blessed him, after which he returned to his house, and the king departed for Jerusalem, and arrived at his house.

XXIII. INSURRECTION AND DEATH OF SHEBA—THE NUMBERING OF THE PEOPLE—THE PLAGUE—DAVID BUILDS AN ALTAR TO MAKE AN ATONEMENT.

"Those who turn aside unto crooked ways the Lord will lead forth with the workers of iniquity."—PSALM CXXV. 5.

"The Lord putteth a check on the pride of princes; he is terrible to the kings of the earth."—PSALM LXXVI. 13.

ABOUT this time, Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benja-

mite rose up against David; he sounded the trumpet and cried, We have no share in David, nor can we hope for anything from the son of Jesse;—return unto your tents, O Israel! All the men of Israel withdrew from David and followed Sheba; but the men of Judah remained faithful unto David. David ordered Amasa to pursue the rebels; but Joab, having slain Amasa, took the field himself against Sheba. The latter had retired to Abel, and Joab came and laid siege to the town, and already his army was labouring to demolish the walls: when a very wise woman cried out from the town, Listen, listen, tell Joab to draw nigh, that I may speak to him. Joab having drawn nigh, she said unto him, A faithful and peaceable city in Israel cries unto thee; thou seekest to destroy a city, a mother in Israel; wherefore wilt thou destroy the Lord's inheritance? Joab replied, Far be it from me that I should wish to sack or to destroy. Deliver up to me a man from the Mount of Ephraim, Sheba, the son of Bichri, by name, who hath revolted from king David, and I will immediately withdraw. The woman then went among the people, and spoke to them with so much wisdom, that she incited them to cut off Sheba's head, and cast it over the walls unto Joab. Joab then immediately blew the trumpet, and having raised the siege, every one returned to his tent. Joab also returned to the king at Jerusalem.

After the Lord had delivered David from all his enemies, and had procured him peace, David was tempted *by pride*, and resolved to have the people numbered. He gave his orders to Joab, and said unto him, Go, number Israel and Judah. But Joab replied, May

the Lord thy God deign to multiply the people and make them increase a hundred fold, so that the eyes of my lord and king may see it; but wherefore doth my lord desire this thing? But the king insisting with firmness, Joab and the chiefs of the army departed from before the king to number the people according to his command. They passed through the whole country to number the people, and returned not until the expiration of nine months and twenty days. Joab delivered to the king the sum of the number of the people, whereby it appeared that there were in Israel eight hundred thousand fighting men, and five hundred thousand in Judah. Now the heart of David was seized with remorse after this numbering of the people, and he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I have been guilty of a great sin in having thus acted; pardon, O Lord, the sin of thy servant, for I have acted very foolishly. The next day the word of the Lord was addressed to the prophet Gad, the seer of David, saying, Go say unto David, thus saith the Lord, I give thee thy choice of three things, choose one of them, and I will do it unto thee. Gad went forthwith unto David, informed him of his mission and said to him, Wilt thou that seven years of famine desolate thy land? or that thou flee during three months before thy enemies, and that they pursue thee? or that there be for three days a pestilence in thy land? Reflect, and tell me what I shall answer unto Him who hath sent me. David replied, I am in a great straight; LET ME SOONER FALL INTO THE HAND OF THE LORD, FOR HIS MERCY IS GREAT, BUT LET ME NOT FALL INTO THE HAND OF MAN. The Lord then sent a plague upon Israel, which carried off seventy-five

thousand people. The angel then stretched forth his hand over Jerusalem to smite it; but the Lord said unto the angel that smote the people, It is enough, withdraw thy hand. The angel of the Lord was then near the threshing-floor of Aravna, the Jebusite. On beholding the angel who smote the people, David said unto the Lord, It is I who have sinned, it is I who am guilty; but this flock, what have they done? Let thy hand, I beseech thee, turn against me, and against my father's house. The same day Gad came unto David and said, Build an altar in honour of the Lord on the threshing-floor of Aravna, the Jebusite. David went immediately, as Gad had told him, by order of the Lord. When Aravna perceived the king, he came forth and bowed down before him, and said unto him, Wherefore doth my lord the king come unto his servant? David replied, It is to buy thy threshing-floor, and to build there an altar in honour of the Lord, that the plague may cease from among the people. And Aravna said, Let my lord the king take for his offering what best pleaseth him; here are the oxen for burnt-offerings, and threshing-instruments, and ox-bows to supply the wood. The prince Aravna gave up everything to the king, saying, May the Lord thy God be favourable unto thee. But the king said unto Aravna, Not so; but I will buy them from thee and pay thee their value. I cannot offer unto the Lord my God burnt-offerings without paying for them. David then bought the threshing-floor and oxen for fifty shekels of silver. He erected there an altar in honour of the Lord, and offered thereon burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. The Lord was besought in favour of the land and the plague was stayed from Israel.

THE BOOK OF KINGS.

ספר מלכים

I. DYING ADDRESS OF DAVID TO HIS SON SOLOMON—DEATH OF DAVID—ACCESSION OF SOLOMON TO THE THRONE.

A. M. 2924—2963.

"Happy is the man who hath found wisdom; happy is he who hath obtained intelligence. She is more precious than silver, and what she supplies is of more value than the purest gold."—PROV. ii. 13-14.

WHEN the time of David's death drew nigh, he gave unto his son Solomon his last commands, saying, Behold, I am about to go the way of all the earth; be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man, and observe the precepts of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes, His commandments, His precepts, and His testimonies, as they are written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou wishest to do, and whithersoever thou turnest; so that the Lord may accomplish the promise which He made concerning me, saying, If thy children guard well their ways, and walk before me with faithfulness, with all their heart, and with all their soul, I promise that thy seed shall never fail on the throne of Israel. David then slept with

his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. He had reigned in all forty years; seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. Solomon then sat on the throne of his father, and his kingdom was very firmly established. Solomon allied himself with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, whose daughter he married, and caused her to reside in the city of David, until he should have finished building his house, and the house of the Lord, and the walls around Jerusalem. The people, at that time, sacrificed on the high places; for they had not, as yet, built a house in the name of the Lord. Solomon loved the Lord, and walked in the manner of David his father, save that he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. Now the king went one day to Gibeon, for there was there a high place of renown, and he offered thereon a thousand burnt-offerings on the altar. And the Lord appeared unto Solomon at Gibeon, in a vision during the night, and said unto him, Ask what thou wilt and I will give it unto thee. And Solomon replied, Thou hast shown great mercy unto thy servant David, my father, because he walked in truth, and in righteousness and in uprightness of heart with Thee; and Thou has continued this great kindness for him by giving him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Lord my God, Thou hast caused thy servant to reign in the place of David my father, and I am as yet but a young man without experience. I am ignorant of the art of government, and I thy servant am in the midst of thy people whom Thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore, thy servant an understanding heart, to judge

Thy people, and that I may discern between good and evil; for who, without that, is able to judge this Thy people? This speech pleased the Lord, and he said to Solomon, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life nor riches, nor the death of thy enemies, but only understanding to discern justice: behold, I grant thee what thou hast asked; I give unto thee a wise and intelligent heart, so that there never was and never shall be one like unto thee. I give unto thee besides what thou hast not asked, both riches and honour; so that there shall be none among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, observing my statutes and my commandments as did David thy father, then will I also grant thee a long life. Solomon awoke, returned to Jerusalem, bowed himself before the ark of the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings; and then gave a feast unto all his servants.

II. JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON.

"The King who faithfully judgeth the poor, assureth his throne for ever."—PROV. xxix. 14.

"The lip of truth shall be established for ever, but a lying tongue is upheld but for a moment."—PROV. xii. 19.

ABOUT this time two women appeared before the king. One of them said, Hear me, my lord! this woman and I dwell in the same house, and I was delivered of a child, near her in the house. The third day after I was delivered, this woman was also delivered of a child; we

were together; there was no one with us; but we two were alone in the house. Now it happened, that the child of this woman died during the night, because she, no doubt, overlaid it. Then she arose during the night, and took my child from my side, whilst I slept; and placed it on her bosom, and laid her dead child on my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to nurse my child, behold, it was dead; but, on examining it attentively, by the light, I perceived it was not my child, to whom I had given birth. The other woman then said, It is not so; but the living child is my son, and the dead is thy son. But the first woman replied, It is not so, but the dead is thy son, and the living is mine; and thus they disputed before the king. Then the king said, Since each pretendeth that the living child is hers, bring hither a sword, let the living child be cut in two, and give the half to one, and the other half to the other. A sword was brought. But the woman, whose was the living child, moved with compassion for her son, cried unto the king, Mercy, my lord, give her the living child, but slay it not; but the first woman said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, divide it. The king then answered and said, Give unto the former the living child, and slay it not, for she is its mother. And all Israel having heard the sentence which the king had given, feared him; for, they perceived that the divine wisdom was with him, to render justice.

III. THE IMMENSE RICHES OF SOLOMON.—EXTENT OF HIS POWER.—DISPLAY OF HIS WISDOM.

"By wisdom is the house built, and by understanding it is established. By science are its apartments filled with all precious and pleasant riches."—PROV. xxiv. 3, 4.

THUS King Solomon reigned over all Israel. He ruled, also, over all the kingdoms from the river Euphrates to the country of the Philistines, and to the frontiers of Egypt; they brought him presents, and were subject to him all his reign. There were consumed daily at Solomon's table, thirty kor of wheaten flour, and sixty kor of common flour, ten fat oxen, twenty oxen from the pastures, and one hundred sheep, besides goats, roebuck, fallow-deer, and fatted poultry. Twelve officers were appointed, who had each to furnish his table for a month, and to let nothing be wanted. Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. The Lord had endowed Solomon with so much wisdom and intelligence, and extensive knowledge, that he surpassed in wisdom all the sages of the East and Egypt; and his fame was spread through all the neighbouring nations. He composed three thousand parables, and one thousand and five songs; he knew how to speak concerning the trees, from the cedar of Lebanon, to the hyssop which groweth in the clefts of the walls; he was acquainted also with the nature and qualities of the quadrupeds, birds, reptiles, and fishes. Men came, therefore, from all nations

to hear the wisdom of Solomon; even on the part of all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his profound wisdom.

IV. THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

"For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He desireth it for a habitation unto himself."—PSALM cxxxii. 13.

HIRAM, king of Tyre (Zor), sent also his servants to Solomon, when he learned that he had been anointed king in the place of his fathers; for Hiram had ever been the friend of David. Then Solomon sent unto him, saying, Thou knowest that David my father was unable to build a house in honour of the Lord his God, in consequence of the wars in which he was engaged on all sides, until the Lord had placed all his enemies under the soles of his feet. But now that the Lord hath established peace around me, so that there is neither an adversary, nor any trouble to dread, I have resolved to build a house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will place after thee on thy throne, shall be the one who shall build a house unto my name. Now, therefore, give orders to cut for me cedar trees out of Lebanon, and my servants shall unite with thy servants; and I will give thee the wages of thy people as thou shalt fix it thyself; for thou knowest that among us there are none who understand hewing timber like unto the Sidonians. Now, when Hiram received this message from Solomon,

he rejoiced greatly, and said, Praised be this day the Lord who hath given unto David a wise son capable of governing this numerous people. Then Hiram sent answer unto Solomon, saying, I will do all thou desirest respecting the timber of cedar and the timber of fir. My servants shall transport it from the Lebanon to the sea-shore, whence I will have it put in floats, and conveyed to the place thou shalt point out to me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them; in exchange thou shalt furnish me with food for my household. So Hiram supplied Solomon with as much timber of cedar and fir as he desired, and Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand kor of wheat, and twenty kor of the purest olive oil for his household. And Solomon covenanted to furnish as much yearly unto Hiram. King Solomon then made a levy of thirty thousand men from all Israel, and sent them to the Lebanon ten thousand at a time every month, so that they were one month at Lebanon and two months at home. Solomon had also seventy thousand bearers of burden and eighty thousand men who hewed stones in the mountains, besides the overseers of the works, who numbered three thousand three hundred. Now, it was in the four hundred and eightieth year after the going out of the children of Israel from Egypt, in the fourth year of the reign of Solomon, that he began to build a house to the Lord. The house was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits broad, and thirty cubits high. The porch was twenty cubits long and ten broad. He built on the walls, around the edifice, a gallery adorned with balustrades. Then the word of the Lord came unto Solomon, As regardeth this

house which thou buildest, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, execute my precepts, and keep all my commandments, I will confirm for thee all that I have promised unto David thy father; and I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel, and I will never abandon my people. At the end of seven years, that is, in the eleventh year of the reign of Solomon, in the eighth month, the temple, and all its parts were finished. Two large pillars of copper, surmounted by capitals adorned with sculpture, were set up before the porch of the temple. Solomon caused also to be made of polished copper a great number of vessels, basins, and other utensils for the service of the sacrifices; but those utensils which were used in the interior of the temple, such as the altar, the table for the shew-bread, the censers, the candlesticks, the musical instruments, and even the hinges of the doors of the interior were of pure gold.

V. DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

"The Lord is nigh unto all those that call on Him; unto all those who call on Him in truth."—PSALM cxlv. 18.

IN the seventh month, at the feast of Tabernacles, all Israel gathered themselves together unto King Solomon, at Jerusalem. The priests and the Levites brought into the temple, the ark of the covenant, with the tabernacle and all the vessels thereof. King Solomon also, and all Israel with him, stood before the ark and sacrificed an innumerable quantity of sheep and oxen. The priests then conveyed the ark to the appointed spot, in the holy of holies, under the wings of the cherubim. The ark

contained nothing but the two tables of stone, which Moses had placed therein on Mount Horeb, when the Lord had made a covenant with the children of Israel, on their coming out of Egypt. And when the priests came forth from the holy place, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. Then the king turned himself round towards all the congregation of Israel, who were standing, and blessed them. Then Solomon placed himself before the altar of the Lord, in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and stretching forth his hands towards the heavens, he said, O Lord, God of Israel, there is no power that can be compared unto Thee, neither in the heavens above, nor on the earth beneath. Thou keepest thy covenant, and showest mercy unto thy servants who walk before Thee, with all their heart. Grant then, O Lord, God of Israel, that the words which Thou didst speak unto thy servant David, my father, may be fulfilled. But will God, in verity, dwell on the earth? The heavens, and the heavens of heavens, cannot contain Thee; how much less then this house that I have built? Nevertheless, have respect, O Lord, my God, to the prayer and supplication of thy servant, that thy eyes may be open night and day towards this house, even towards this spot, of which thou hast said, My name shall be there. Hearken unto the supplication of thy servant and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place; and hear them from thy dwelling place in heaven; and when Thou hearest, forgive. When any one shall trespass against his neighbour, and he shall come to take, before thy altar in this house, the oath that shall be tendered him:

then, hear Thou in heaven, and do justice unto thy servants, condemning the guilty, by causing his perfidy to fall on his own head; and justify the innocent, by rendering unto him according to his righteousness. When thy people Israel shall have been vanquished by the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and they shall return unto Thee, and shall confess thy name, and pray and supplicate Thee in this house: then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sins of thy people Israel; and bring them back unto the land which Thou hast given unto their fathers. When the heavens shall be shut up, and there be no rain, because they have sinned against Thee, and they pray towards this place, and confess thy name, and shall turn from their sin when thou afflictest them: then, hear them in heaven and forgive the sins of thy servant and of thy people Israel, and teach them the good way in which they should walk, and send rain on the land which Thou hast given unto thy people, as an inheritance. Should a famine happen in the land, or a pestilence, or any other scourge or malady, and then a man, be he whosoever he may, of thy people Israel, come, in the affliction of his heart, and extending his hands towards this dwelling, address to Thee his prayers and supplications: then, hear him in heaven, thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do unto every man according to his ways, as Thou shalt judge the sentiments of his heart; for Thou alone knowest the hearts of all men. And even the stranger, who is not of thy people Israel, and who, arriving from a far country, for the sake of thy name (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of

thy strength and thy power,) shall come and pray toward this house: then, hear Thou in heaven, thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth on Thee for; so, that all the people of the earth may recognise thy name, and fear Thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may learn to know that this house, which I have built, is called by thy name.

When Solomon had ended all his prayer unto the Lord he arose from before the altar, where he had been kneeling, and blessed with a loud voice all the people of Israel, saying, Praised be the Lord, who hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that He promised, and who hath not let fail one of the good promises which He hath made by the hand of Moses his servant. May the Lord our God be with us as He was with our fathers, may He not leave nor forsake us; but may he incline our hearts toward Him, so that we may walk in all his ways and observe his commandments, his statutes and his precepts, which he commanded unto our fathers. And may my words, wherewith I have made supplication unto the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God day and night, so that He may maintain the cause of his servant and of his people Israel at all times, so that all the nations of the earth may acknowledge that the Lord alone is God, and that there is none else. But likewise, let your hearts be entirely with the Lord our God, so that ye walk in his statutes and keep his commandments, as at this day. Then the king and all Israel offered sacrifices before the Lord. The number of sacrifices which Solomon offered before the Lord was twenty-two

thousand oxen, and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. In this manner did Solomon and all Israel dedicate the house of the Lord. During fourteen days did Solomon and all Israel celebrate a feast before the Lord, to wit, seven days for the feast of Dedication, and seven days for the feast of Tabernacles. On the eighth day he dismissed the people, who, praising the king, returned to their tents joyful and content, pleased at all the good which the Lord had done to David his servant and to his people Israel.

VI. THE LORD APPEARS A SECOND TIME UNTO SOLOMON.—THE QUEEN OF SHEBA—PROSPERITY OF SOLOMON.

"The crown of the wise is their prosperity; the vanity of fools is folly."—PROV. xiv. 24.

THE Lord afterwards appeared a second time unto Solomon, as He had appeared unto him in Gibeon, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, which thou hast made before me; I have sanctified this house which thou hast built to put therein my name for ever; and my eyes and my heart shall ever be attentive thereto. And if thou wilt walk before me, as did David thy father, in the integrity of thy heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my laws: then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom over Israel for ever, as I have promised to David, thy father, for all thy descendants. But if you turn away from following me, ye and your descendants, and do not keep

ny commandments and my statutes which I have set
efore you, but go and serve strange gods, and worship
hem: then will I root out Israel from the land which I
ave given them, and this house which I have hallowed
or my name will I cast off from my sight, and Israel
hall become a proverb and a by-word among all the
ations.

The queen of Sheba* having heard of the great re-
utation which Solomon had acquired through the name
f the Lord, came to try him with difficult questions.
She accordingly arrived at Jerusalem with a numerous
etinue; her camels were laden with spices, a large
uantity of gold and precious stones. She presented
erself before Solomon, and was gratified with all she
aw as much as she had expected. Solomon gave her
n explanation of everything; the meaning of nothing
vas so concealed from him that he was unable to expound
t. When the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solo-
non, and his newly-built palace, his table service, his
ourt, the management of his house, and, lastly, the
acrifices which he offered in the temple of the Lord, she
vas penetrated with astonishment. And she said unto
im, All that I have learnt of thee in my country con-
erning thy acts and thy wisdom is true; I could not
elieve it before I saw it with my own eyes; but now I
ind that I had not been told the half; for thy wisdom
nd thy prosperity surpass all that I have heard related.
) happy are thy people and thy servants, who are
lways about thee and hear thy wisdom. Praised be the

* A country of Arabia Felix, celebrated for its richness in gold, precious stones, and spices.

Lord thy God, who hath found delight in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because He loveth Israel for ever, therefore the Lord hath made thee king over them, in order to execute justice and true judgment. Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold and a vast quantity of spices as well as precious stones. Never since hath such a vast quantity of spices been brought into the country as that which the queen of Sheba gave to Solomon. The king gave also to queen Sheba rich presents, worthy of his magnificence. After which she returned with her servants to her own country.

The ships of Hiram, which went for gold to Ophir, brought likewise to Solomon abundance of almug trees and precious stones. The king had also at sea, in company with the vessels of Hiram, a ship which went to Tarshish, and returned every three years laden with gold, silver, ivory, monkeys, and peacocks. Besides which, he received as tribute a very large quantity of gold and silver, garments, armour, spices, horses, and mules. Silver was at this period as little thought of in Jerusalem as common stones. The king also had cast two hundred targets and three hundred shields of pure gold, which he placed in his palace in the forest of Lebanon. He had also made a throne of ivory overlaid with fine gold. This throne had six steps, and was surmounted by a circular top; the two arms of the chair were each ornamented with a lion, as well as the six steps of the throne, on which were placed twelve lions; there was not the like made in any kingdom. All the vessels of the king and all the furniture of his palace in the forest

of Lebanon were of pure gold. Thus king Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth both in riches and in wisdom.

VII. CORRUPTION OF SOLOMON—CONSEQUENCE OF HIS SINS—JEROBOAM—DEATH OF SOLOMON.

"But when the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations of the wicked, ought he to live? None of his passed virtues shall be counted unto him; by reason of his trespass and his transgression which he hath done, shall he die?"—EZEK. xviii. 24.

BUT notwithstanding these blessings, Solomon rendered himself guilty towards God by taking wives from among the people of whom God had said, Ye shall not mix with them, neither shall ye admit them among you; for they will certainly incline your hearts towards their idols. And it came to pass that when Solomon was old his wives perverted his heart, and made him to follow strange gods, so that his heart was no longer entirely devoted to the Lord his God, as had been that of David his father. He caused to be built high places for the abominable worship of idols; and his strange wives came and offered there incense and sacrifices to their gods. Thus Solomon did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, who was angry with him for that his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had twice appeared unto him and had forbidden him to follow strange gods. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Since thou hast acted thus, and hast not kept

my covenant and my statutes which I commanded thee, I will rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Nevertheless, I will not do it in thy days, for the sake of David thy father, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Yet I will not take it altogether from him; but I will leave one tribe unto thy son for the sake of David my servant, and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen. The Lord then raised up adversaries to Solomon; to wit, Hadad, of the royal race of Edom, and one Rezon, who had fled from his master the king of Zobah; and they ceased not troubling the kingdom all the time that Solomon yet lived. Jeroboam, a young man of great bravery, of the tribe of Ephraim who was in the service of Solomon, also revolted from him. Now this it was which gave rise to this rebellion against the king: one day Jeroboam had gone out of Jerusalem when the prophet Achijah of Shilo met him; they were the only two in the field. And Achijah seized the cloak which covered him, tore it in twelve pieces, and said to Jeroboam, Take ten of these pieces, for thus saith the Lord the God of Israel, I will rend the kingdom from Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee. And if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt do that which is just in my eyes, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as did David my servant: then will I be with thee, and will raise thee up a sure house in Israel. Solomon wished to slay Jeroboam; but he fled to Egypt, to Shishak, where he remained until the death of Solomon. After having reigned forty years over all Israel Solomon died, and was buried in the city of David, his

father. And his son Rehoboam (Rechobam,) succeeded him in the government.

VIII. REHOBOAM REJECTS THE COUNSEL OF THE OLD MEN—REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES—DIVISION OF THE LAND INTO THE KINGDOMS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

A. M. 2964.

"Wo unto them that decree unrighteous laws."—Isaiah x. 1.
"By justice doth a king cause the state to flourish; by oppressing it, it is overthrown."—Prov. xxiv. 4.

Rehoboam went to Shechem, for there all Israel had assembled to proclaim him king. And all the assembled Israelites spoke unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father imposed on us a very heavy yoke, lighten now our heavy burden, and we will submit to thee. Rehoboam answered them, Go your ways for three days, and then return unto me. The people having withdrawn, Rehoboam consulted with the old men, who had been in the service of his father Solomon. These said unto him, If thou wilt show thyself submissive to-day towards the people, speaking to them with kind words, they will be thy servants for ever. But Rehoboam rejected the counsel of the aged men, and took advice from the young men, who had grown up with him, and who formed his advisers. These counselled him to reply harshly to the people, and to say to them, I will aggravate still more your yoke; and my little finger shall be thicker than the loins of my father. On the third day Jeroboam, (Yerobam)

appeared with all the people before Rehoboam; who replied to them arrogantly, My father imposed on you a heavy yoke, I will yet aggravate it; my father chastised you with rods, but I will chastise you with leather thongs. The people seeing that the king would not listen to them withdrew, saying, What portion have we in David? What inheritance in the son of Jesse? To your tents, O Israel; now, look well to thy own house, descendant of David! The king, Rehoboam, afterwards sent to them Adoram, the collector of the tribute; but the Israelites stoned him to death. The king, himself, was forced to flee in all haste towards Jerusalem. All Israel then sent to summon Jeroboam before the assembly of the people, and proclaimed him king; so, Rehoboam no longer reigned but only over those children of Israel, who inhabited the cities of Judah and Benjamin. The ten other tribes were thus separated from the house of David.

IX. JEROBOAM INCITES HIS SUBJECTS TO IDOLATRY—APPARITION OF A MAN OF GOD, WHO PREDICTS THE BIRTH OF JOSIA (YOSHIYAHU)—THE WIFE OF JEROBOAM AT THE HOUSE OF THE PROPHET ACHIJAH.

"When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth; but the righteous shall see their fall."—PROV. xxix. 16.

Now Jeroboam reasoned thus, If this people continue to go up to Jerusalem, to offer there their sacrifices in the house of the Lord, their hearts may return towards

Rehoboam, king of Judah; and they will slay me, and go over again to Rehoboam, the king of Judah. Whereupon, after having consulted about it, the king caused to be made two golden calves, and said to the people, Ye have gone up often enough to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel! that brought thee out of the land of Egypt. And he placed one of these calves at Bethel and the other at Dan. The people were thus enticed to sin; and they went even unto Dan, to worship the idol. He built likewise a temple for idol worship; he also established priests, chosen from the lowest class of the people, and instituted new feasts. On a certain day, during one of these feasts, as he himself approached the altar to offer incense thereon, behold a man of God, just arrived from Judah, by order of the Lord cried out, Altar! altar! thus saith the Lord, Behold a son shall be born unto the house of David, his name shall be Josiah! he shall offer upon thee the priests of the high places, who burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. Then the man of God gave a sign, as proof of his divine mission, saying, This altar shall now be rent in twain, and the ashes, which are upon it, shall spread over the earth. When the king heard these words, he stretched forth his hand above the altar, exclaiming, Seize him; but immediately, the hand he had stretched forth against the man of God, dried up, so that he could no longer draw it back towards him. At the same time the altar was rent, and the ashes were spread over the ground, as the man of God had announced in the name of the Lord. Then the king said to the man of God, Entreat now the Lord thy God, and pray for me

that He restore the use of my hand. The man of God besought the Lord, and the hand of the king became as it was heretofore. Then the king said unto him, Come home with me and refresh thyself, and I will make thee a present; but the man of God replied, If thou wouldst give me half of thy house, I would not go with thee, neither will I eat or drink anything in this place; for, so was it charged unto me by the word of the Lord, Thou shalt eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way which thou didst come. After this event, did Jeroboam not turn from his wicked ways, notwithstanding all he had seen; but continued the worship of the high places, and became a cause of sin unto his house, and he mislead it to transgression, so as to cause its ruin and destruction.

About this time Abijah, Jeroboam's son, fell sick. Jeroboam then said to his wife, Disguise thyself, so that thou mayest not be recognised as my wife, and set out for Shiloh, where dwelleth the prophet Achijah, who foretold to me that I should become king over Israel. And take with thee ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go unto him, and he will tell thee what will happen unto the child. Jeroboam's wife did so, and departed for Shiloh. But Achijah could no longer see, his eyes were dimmed by reason of old age. But the Lord had made known unto him the coming of Jeroboam's wife, and the motive of her journey. She soon arrived and feigned to be a stranger; but as soon as Achijah heard her footsteps, he said unto her, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam, why dost thou disguise thyself? and I am sent to thee with a severe message. Go, say

to Jeroboam, thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Because I exalted thee from among the people, and set thee as a chief over my people Israel, and I rent the kingdom from the house of David, and gave it to thee; and thou hast not been as my servant David, and hast provoked me to anger, by doing more evil than all those that have gone before thee, and hast rejected me with disdain: therefore will I bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, until not one thereof shall be left. As to thee, return to thy house, and as soon as thou enterest the city, thy child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he alone, of all the house of Jeroboam, shall be laid in the grave, because in him alone there is found something good towards the Lord, the God of Israel, among all the house of Jeroboam. And the Lord will also smite Israel, which shall be shaken as a reed is in the water; and he will root them up out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and scatter them on the other side of the river (Euphrates), and deliver them over to their enemies, in consequence of the sins of Jeroboam, who sinned and caused Israel to transgress. Jeroboam's wife set out on her journey and returned to Tirza; and as soon as she arrived at the threshold of her house, her son died. All Israel buried him, and mourned over him; as the Lord had spoken through his servant Achijah, the prophet. After having reigned twenty-two years, Jeroboam died, and his son Nadab reigned in his place.

X. THE KINGS OF JUDAH, REHOBOAM, ABIJAM, AND ASA.

"Let the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem then go and pray unto the gods to which they offer incense; but these cannot save them in the time of their trouble."—JEREMIAH xi. 12.

REHOBOAM, king of Judah, did also evil in the sight of the Lord. The people of Judah built high places, planted groves, raised altars on every high hill, under each green tree, and imitated the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had driven out before the children of Israel. Wherefore it happened that in the fifth year of the reign of Rehoboam, Shishak (Sesor), king of Egypt, marched against Jerusalem. He seized the treasures of the temple, as well as those of the king's house; and he took all the precious things, among others the golden shields which Solomon had made. War was also continually waged between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. After a reign of seventeen years, Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, died, and was succeeded by his son Abijam. He also did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the steps of his father in the ways of sin. He died after a reign of three years, and his son Asa succeeded him. Asa did that which was right in the sight of the Lord; he purified the country from all the abominations with which his predecessors had sullied it; he even deprived his grandmother, Maachah, of all authority, because she had made an idol for a grove. But the high-places were not destroyed; yet the heart of Asa was entirely devoted to the Lord during all his life. He brought likewise into

the house of the Lord vessels of gold and silver which his father and he had consecrated. During the war which still continued between Asa and Baasha, king of Israel, Asa took all the gold and silver which he found in the treasures of the temple and the king's house, and sent them to Ben Hadad, king of Aram (Syria), to obtain from him an alliance against Baasha, king of Israel. Benhadad accepted the proposals of Asa, and sent the chiefs of his army against Baasha and Israel. Then Baasha ceased his hostilities. Asa died after a reign of forty-one years, and was buried with his fathers, in the city of David. And his son Jehoshaphat reigned in his stead.

XI. THE KINGS OF ISRAEL, ELAH, ZIMRI, OMRI, AND ACHAB (AHAB),—THE PROPHET ELIJAH.

"The Lord fulfilleth the desire of those who fear him, and He heareth their entreaty and saveth them."—PSALM cxlv. 19.

AFTER the death of Baasha, king of Israel, Elah, his son, succeeded him. But one of his officers, named Zimri, conspired against him and slew him, and had himself proclaimed king in his stead, at Tirza. Zimri exterminated all the family of Baasha. But for all this, he reigned only seven days; for the army which besieged Gibthon, having heard of the conspiracy and usurpation of Zimri, proclaimed Omri, chief of the army of Israel, as king, and he marched immediately with all his army to besiege Tirza. Zimri, seeing that the town would be

taken, retired to the king's palace and destroyed himself by fire, with all the house. Then the people became divided into two parties; the one was for Tibni, the other for Omri. The latter having carried the day, and Tibni having died, Omri was proclaimed king of Israel. He reigned twelve years, and followed the sins of Jeroboam. Omri died, and was buried in Shomrone (Samaria), a city which he had built on the mountain of the same name. His son Achab (Ahab) succeeded him. Ahab, whose reign lasted twenty-two years, did more evil in the sight of the Lord than all those that had gone before him; and he was not content to follow in the wicked ways of Jeroboam, but he also took for wife Isebel (Jezebel), daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon; and he served and worshipped Baal, to whom he raised a temple and an altar at Samaria. It was thus Ahab acted to provoke the Lord to anger, more than all the kings of Israel that had reigned before him. About this time there was a great famine in the land; for the Lord had shut up the heavens, and there fell neither rain nor dew, as Elijah the Tishbite had predicted unto Ahab. And the word of the Lord came to Elijah, Get away from this place and turn thyself eastward, and conceal thyself near the brook of Kerith, opposite Jordan; and thou shalt drink from the brook, and I have ordered the ravens to feed thee there. He went according to the word of the Lord, and the ravens brought him bread and meat morning and evening, and he drank from the brook. Some time after the brook dried up, for there had been no rain in the land. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to

Sidon, and dwell there; behold I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So Elijah arose and went to Zarephath. On arriving at the gate of the city he saw a widow woman gathering sticks, and he called to her and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a bowl, that I may drink. As she went to procure it, he called to her and said, Bring me also, I pray thee, a morsel of bread. But she said, As true as the Lord thy God liveth, I have but a handful of meal and a little oil in a cruise; I just came to collect a little wood to prepare a meal for me and my son, and when that is finished, we have nought to do but to die. Elijah said unto her, Fear not, go and do as thou hast said, but first make me thereof a small cake, and bring it to me, and then thou mayest do so likewise for thyself and thy son. For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not be consumed, and the cruse of oil shall not fail until the day on which the Lord shall send rain upon the earth. She then went and did as Elijah had told her; and she and her family had to eat for a long time; for neither the meal nor the oil diminished, according to the saying of Elijah. Shortly after this, the woman's son fell sick, and his disorder became so violent that he no longer showed signs of life. Then the woman said to Elijah, Man of God, doubtless thou camest unto me only to call my sins to remembrance, and to slay my son! But Elijah said unto her, Give me thy son; then, having taken him in his arms, he carried him into the chamber which he occupied, and laid him on his bed. Then he stretched himself three times over the child and prayed to the Lord and said, O Lord my God, grant that

the soul of this child may return unto him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child returned again to him, and he recovered. Elijah then took up the child, brought him to his mother and said, Behold, thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, Now I do know thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.

XII. INTERVIEW BETWEEN ELIJAH AND AHAB—CONFUSION AND MASSACRE OF THE PRIESTS OF BAAL—FLIGHT OF ELIJAH—ELISHA (ELISHANY.)

"They shall be confounded all those who worship images, and who boast of their idols; let all gods bow down unto him, *the Lord.*"—PSALMS xcvii. 7.

IN the third year of the famine, the word of the Lord came unto Elijah, and said, Go, show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth. The famine was then exceeding great in Samaria. Elijah being on the road, met Obadiah, the governor of Ahab's house. He recognised Elijah and fell on his face before him, and said, Art thou my lord Elijah? Now Obadiah was very pious; and when Isebel caused the prophets of the Lord to be destroyed, he took a hundred of them, and hid them in a cave by fifties, and furnished them with bread and water. Obadiah, being directed by the prophet, informed Ahab of Elijah's arrival, and Ahab went to meet him. As soon as he perceived Elijah, he exclaimed, Art thou here, thou who bringest trouble upon Israel? But Elijah answered him, It is not I that have

troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house, because ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, to follow the worship of idols. Nevertheless, send now and assemble together all Israel unto me on Mount Carmel, and likewise the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of the grove, who eat at the table of Isebel. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. Then Elijah advanced towards the people, and said, How long will ye still hesitate between two opinions? if the Lord be the true God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. But the people answered not a word. Elijah then continued and said, I am alone remaining a prophet of the Lord, and the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty; let them give unto us two bullocks, and let them choose one for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under. And I will prepare the other bullock, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under. Then call ye on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and let the God, who shall answer by fire, be the true God. And all the people answered and said, The offer is fair. Elijah then said unto the prophets of Baal, Select ye one of the bullocks and dress it first, for ye are the many. They did so, and having prepared the bullock, they called on the name of Baal, from morning until noon. Elijah then mocked them, saying, Cry more loudly, for your god is perhaps speaking; doubtless he is busy or on a journey; perchance he sleepeth and must be awakened. They accordingly cried aloud and wounded themselves according to their

custom with knives and lancets, until their blood gushed out over them. When they had thus continued their follies until the hour for the evening sacrifice, Elijah said to the people, Draw nigh unto me; and all the people drew nigh unto him. Then he repaired the altar of the Lord which had been broken, and dug a trench around; arranged the wood, on which he placed the bullock, and made them throw water several times on the flesh and the wood, till he had filled the trench which he had made around the altar with water. He then said, O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be proven this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that it is by thy word, I have done all these things. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that all this people may know that Thou art the Lord the true God.

Immediately thereupon the fire of the Lord did descend, and consumed the burnt-offering, the wood, the stones, and the earth, and dried up even the water which was in the trench. The people, seeing this, fell with their face to the ground, and cried out, The Lord is the true God! the Lord is the true God! Elijah next caused them to lay hold of the prophets of Baal, and to take them down to the brook of Kishone, where they slew them. Isebel having learnt the slaughter of the prophets of Baal, sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, May the gods for ever punish me, if I do not unto thee to-morrow as thou hast caused to be done to each of them. Elijah, therefore, fled into the desert, where he seated himself under a juniper tree, and said, I have lived long enough, now, O Lord, take my life; for I am not better than my forefathers. And he fell asleep under the tree, and an angel

of the Lord touched him, and said, Arise and eat. He looked and beheld at his head a cake baked on coals, and a pitcher of water. He ate, drank, and laid himself down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him and said, Arise, and eat, because otherwise the journey will be too great for thee. Elijah did as he was commanded, and travelled, thus strengthened, forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the Mount of God. And as he was passing the night in a cave near Mount Horeb, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, What doest thou here, Elijah? He replied, I have been very zealous for the Lord the God Zebaoth; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant; they have thrown down thy altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I alone am left, and they seek my life to take it away. The divine word then said unto him, Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, as the Lord passed, a violent and powerful wind which rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks, preceded the Lord; but the Lord was not in the storm. After the storm there was an earthquake, but the Lord appeared not in the earthquake. Then there was a fire, but the Lord appeared not in the fire; and after the fire, there was a still small voice. When Elijah heard it he covered his face with his mantle, and stood at the entrance of the cavern. And the Lord said unto him, Return by the way of the desert, and go and anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi, as King of Israel, and Elisha, the son of Shaphat as a prophet in thy stead. Elijah departed and met Elisha, who was engaged in ploughing the field. Elijah approached him and threw his mantle

over him. Elisha directly left his oxen, ran after him and said, Let me go and kiss my father and mother and then I will follow thee. And Elijah answered, Go, and return. Elisha as he left him, killed a couple of oxen, cooked them with the wood of the yokes, and gave to his men to eat; he then arose, followed Elijah and ministered unto him.

XIII. THE VINEYARD OF NABOTH. DEATH OF AHAB.

"As a roaring lion and a famished bear is a wicked ruler over a poor people."—PROV. xxviii. 15.

"It is better to have a little with honesty than to have many revenues acquired by injustice."—PROV. xvi. 8.

AFTER these events, the following occurrence took place. Naboth, of Yezreël, had a vineyard adjoining the palace of Ahab, King of Samaria. One day Ahab said to Naboth, Give me thy vineyard, for I wish to make a kitchen garden of it, as it is near my house, and I will give thee in exchange a better vineyard, or, if it pleases thee better, I will give thee its value in money. But Naboth said, The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to thee. Ahab thereupon returned to his house gloomy and angry at Naboth's answer; and he lay on his bed, turned his face to the wall and ate not. Isebel, his wife, came unto him and said, Why art thou so sad, and eatest nothing? He answered, Because I have besought Naboth to sell me his vineyard, and he hath refused. Isebel then said to him, Dost thou only now begin to reign over Israel? Arise, eat and be merry of heart, and I will find means to obtain the vineyard for thee.

She immediately wrote letters in the name of Ahab, and affixed his seal thereto, and sent them to the elders and chiefs of the city in which Naboth dwelt. She wrote in these letters as follows, Proclaim a fast, and place Naboth at the head of the people, and put opposite to him two worthless men who shall testify against him, saying, Thou hast blasphemed God and the king. Then shall ye carry him out, and stone him to death. The elders and the chief men did as Isebel had directed them in their letters. They proclaimed a fast, and placed Naboth at the head of the people. Then two worthless men placed themselves opposite him, and these wicked men accused him before the people, saying, Naboth hath blasphemed God and the king. And they led him forth out of the city, and stoned him, and he died. After which they sent to acquaint Isebel that Naboth had been stoned. Then Isebel said to Ahab, Arise, go take possession of the vineyard which Naboth refused thee; for he no longer liveth, but is dead. As soon as Ahab heard of the death of Naboth, he arose and set out for the vineyard of Naboth in order to take possession of it. But the word of the Lord came unto Elijah, saying, Arise, go onward to meet Ahab, King of Israel, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou not slain and also taken possession? But thus saith the Lord, On the same spot where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, shall they also lick up thy own blood. Ahab then said to Elijah, Hast thou again found something against me, my enemy? And he replied, Yea, I have found that thou hast delivered thyself up to do what is evil in the eye of the Lord. Likewise, will I cause trouble to descend upon

thee, and I will annihilate thy house as the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat; because thou hast provoked me unto anger, and hast caused Israel to sin. The Lord hath likewise pronounced this decree against Isebel, The dogs shall devour Isebel in the valley of Yezreel. Whoever dieth of the house of Ahab in the city, shall be eaten by the dogs, and whoever dieth in the fields shall be eaten by the birds of heaven. When Ahab heard these words he rent his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, fasted, and moved along silently. And the words of the Lord came again unto Elijah saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? now, since he hath so humbled himself before me, I will not bring down upon him the evil in his days, but in the days of his son will I bring down the evil on his house.

Three years had passed without war between Aram (Syria) and Israel; but at the end of the third year Ahab took the field against Aram, and was wounded. The blood of the wounded man ran into the chariot, and when they washed the chariot the dogs licked the king's blood, as the Lord had announced. Ahab died from this wound on the evening of the same day and was buried in Samaria, and his son Ahaziah succeeded him.

XIV. JEHOSHAPHAT, KING OF JUDAH—ASCENSION OF ELIJAH—ELISHA RECEIVES THE PROPHETIC SPIRIT.

A. M. 3024–3049.

"The death of the righteous is precious in the sight of the Lord."—PSALM cvi. 15.

JEHOSHAPHAT, the son of Asa, reigned twenty-five years over Judah. He followed the steps of his father,

and did that which was pleasant in the eyes of the Lord. He also lived all the time in peace with the king of Israel. Jehoshaphat was gathered unto his fathers, and his son Jehoram succeeded him.

Elijah and Elisha having gone together from Gilgal, Elijah said to Elisha, Stay here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel. But Elisha replied, As sure as the Lord liveth, and as thou livest, I will not quit thee. The young prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, Knowest thou that the Lord will this day take thy master away from thee? But he replied, I know it, be silent. Elijah then said to him, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. But Elisha swore anew that he would not quit him. When they had arrived at Jericho, the young prophets of that city said to Elisha, Knowest thou that the Lord will this day take thy master away from thee? But he replied, I also know it well, be silent. Elijah said to him again, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me towards the Jordan; but Elisha still persisting in following him, they continued their journey together.

And fifty of the young prophets came and placed themselves opposite to them at a considerable distance, whilst the two stood by the Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and smote the waters, and they separated immediately, and they both went over on dry ground. When they had traversed the stream, Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask of me what thou wilt that I shall do for thee, before I am taken from thee; and Elisha replied, I beseech thee that a double portion of thy spirit

may rest upon me. But Elijah said, Thou askest a difficult thing; nevertheless, if thou behold me at the moment that I am taken away from thee, it shall be granted unto thee; if not, it shall not be. As they walked onward talking together, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire parted them asunder, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha, who saw him, cried out, O my father! O my father! the chariot and horse of Israel! And when he could no longer behold him, he took hold of his garments and rent them in two. After which he lifted up the mantle which Elijah had let fall, and returned and stopt on the borders of the Jordan. Then he took the mantle and smote the waters, saying, Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah? and when he had also smitten the waters, they parted to both sides, and he passed over. When the young prophets of Jericho saw him from afar, they said, The spirit of Elijah resteth on Elisha; and they came to meet him, and prostrated themselves to the earth before him; and they said to him, Among thy servants there are fifty courageous men, let them go in search of thy master; perhaps the spirit of the Lord hath carried him away, and cast him on one of those mountains, or in one of the valleys. But Elisha replied, Ye shall not send. But as they continued to press and importune him, he said at last, Send. So they sent fifty men who sought about for three days, but could not find him. Elisha then went to Bethel, afterwards to Mount Carmel, and then returned to Samaria.

XV. MIRACLES PERFORMED BY ELISHA.

"Our God is in heaven; he doth all that pleaseth Him."
PSALM CXV. 3.

ONE day the wife of one of the young prophets came lamenting unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant, my husband is dead; and thou knowest that he was pious; and now the creditor wants to take my two sons away to be slaves to him. But Elisha answered her, What can I do for thee? Tell me what thou hast in thy house. She replied, Thy handmaid hath nothing remaining in the house but a jar of oil. The Prophet then said, Go borrow thyself empty vessels of all thy neighbours, and let them not be few; then return into thy house, shut thyself in with thy sons, and pour the oil into all those vessels, and take them out as they are filled. She left him and did as he had told her. When all the vessels were filled, she said to her son, Give me yet another vessel, but he answered, There are no more; and the oil ceased flowing. Then she went and acquainted the man of God with what she had done, and he replied, Go sell this oil, pay thy debt, and thou and thy children can live on the remainder.—It also happened one day, that Elisha was passing through Shunam, where a woman of high rank pressed him to eat with her, and after that, he ate there every time he passed through that way. Now this woman said to her husband, I have learnt that this man who often passes here is a holy man of God. Let us fit him up a chamber in the upper part of the house,

and put there a bed, table, chair, and lamp, and whe
he cometh among us, he shall lodge there. One da
having come there to pass the night, he said to hi
servant Gehazi, Call me this Shunamite. Having don
so, she appeared before him ; he then said to his servan
Say unto her, since thou hast taken so much troubl
and pains for us, what can I do for thee? shall I spea
in thy behalf to the king or the chief of the army? Sh
replied, however, I dwell in peace in the midst of m
people. Elisha then said, What can be done for her
and Gehazi said, Truly she hath no child, and he
husband is old. And Elisha said, Call her back. H
called her, and she came and stood at the door of hi
chamber. Elisha then said to her, At this very tim
next year thou shalt embrace a son. But she replied, Na
my lord, man of God, raise not false hopes in thy ser
vant. But the woman conceived and bore a son th
year following, at the time that Elisha had stated. No
the child grew up, and went one day with his father t
the field among the reapers; on a sudden, he exclaime
Oh, my head! my head! The father said to the servan
Carry him to his mother. The servant carried him t
his mother, on whose knees he rested until midday
when he died. The woman raised him up, and lai
him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the doo
upon him. Then she sent word to her husband, saying
Send me one of thy servants and a she-ass, and I wi
just run to the man of God and I will return soon. Bu
he said to her, Why wishest thou to go to him to-day
it is neither new moon nor Sabbath. She however re
plied, Be in peace. She then made them saddle the ass

ıd said to the servant, Drive on, go forward, and stop
ıe not in riding, unless I tell thee. So she set out to go
the man of God at Mount Carmel. Having arrived,
ıe presented herself unto the man of God, and embraced
is knees. Gehazi drew near to repulse her; but the
an of God said, Leave her alone, for her soul is
fflicted, and the Lord hath concealed from me the
ause. And she said unto him, Did I then ask of my
rd a son? said I not, Give me not false hopes? Elisha
ien said unto Gehazi, Gird up thy loins and take my
aff in thy hand, and go thy way. If thou meet any
ne salute him not, and if any salute thee, answer him
ot; and lay my staff upon the face of the child. But
ıe mother of the child said, As sure as the Lord liveth
nd thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. Then he
rose and she followed him. Gehazi had set out before
ıem, and had placed the staff on the face of the child;
ut not a sound nor a sign of life ensued; he returned
nd reported to his master that the child had not awoke.
Elisha arrived and found the child lying dead on his
ed. He went into the room, closed the door and
rayed to the Lord; then getting on the bed, he laid
imself on the child, put his mouth to its mouth, his
yes to its eyes, his hands to its hands, and stretched
imself over him so that the child's body might receive
varmth. He soon arose, walked across the room, then
got up and laid himself again upon the child. And the
hild sneezed seven times, and opened its eyes. He then
aused the woman to be called, and said to her, Carry
way thy child. She cast herself at his feet and bowed
lown, then took her son and went away. Elisha then
eturned to Gilgal.

A certain man one day having brought him some of the first fruits, to wit, twenty loaves of barley and some corn in husk, Elisha said to his servant, Give them to the people that they may eat. The servant answered, How can I share this among a hundred persons? But Elisha said, Give it only unto them; for thus the Lord hath said, They shall eat, and they shall leave thereof. He then gave them the loaves, and they did eat and did leave thereof, according to the word of the Lord.

Naaman, chief of the army of the King of Aram (Syria), was a valiant man and high in favour with his master; for it was through him that the Lord had given a victory to Aram; yet this powerful and valiant man was a leper. Now there was a young Hebrew maiden, whom the Aramean bands had carried away, who was a servant to Naaman's wife; and she said one day to her mistress, If my master were to go to the prophet at Samaria, he would cure him of his leprosy. Naaman reported to his master what the Israelitish girl had said. The King of Aram then said to him, Set out then, and I will give thee a letter to the King of Israel. Naaman departed, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment, and delivered his letter to the King of Israel; who, when he read its contents, tore his garments, saying, Am I God, that I can kill and make alive? that he sendeth unto me to restore a man from his leprosy? Wherefore consider, and see, how he seeketh only a pretext to quarrel with me. Elisha, the man of God, hearing this thing, sent a message to the King of Israel, as followeth, Why hast thou rent thy garments? let him come unto

ne and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his chariots and his horsemen, and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. The latter sent him word, Go and bathe thyself seven times in the Jordan and thou shalt be cured. Naaman, exceedingly wroth, went away, saying, I thought he would have come out unto me, would have invoked the name of the Lord, his God, would have placed his hands on the sick places, and would have cured me. Are not Amana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Can I not bathe therein and be cured? But his servants said unto him, My lord, if the prophet had ordered thee to do a difficult thing, wouldst thou not have performed it? How much more then oughtest thou to do this, since he saith to thee only, Bathe thyself and be well. So he went to the river Jordan, and dipped himself in seven times, as the man of God had directed him, and his flesh became again as that of a young man, and he was cured. Then he returned with all his followers to the man of God, and appeared before him and said, Now I know that there is no god in all the earth but the God of Israel; deign, I beseech thee, to accept a present from thy servant. But Elisha replied, I swear by the life of God, whom I adore, as the Lord liveth, I will take nothing. Naaman urged him again, but he refused. Naaman then said, Permit thy servant to take two mule-loads of the earth of this land; for thy servant will never more offer sacrifices but to the Lord God. Only for this thing may the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth to the temple of Rimon to worship there, he leaneth on my

arm, I am then obliged to bow down with him. May the Lord forgive me therefor. Elisha answered him, Go in peace.

During a war between Aram and Israel the Aramean army besieged Samaria, and the famine became so violent there that even mothers had to eat their children to sustain their life. The king, Joram, became so irritated against the prophet Elisha that he swore to put him to death. Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting around him, when the king sent there a man, but before he appeared, Elisha said unto the old men, See ye, the son of the murderer hath sent to cut off my head. When the messenger shall come, shut the door and push him away, for the steps of his master are heard behind him. He was still speaking when the messenger arrived, and the king, who was behind him, said, This evil is from the Lord, what shall I yet expect from the Lord? Elisha then said, Hearken to the word of the Lord; thus saith the Lord, To-morrow at this hour a measure of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gates of Samaria. The officer on whose arm the king leaned, replied to the man of God, Will the Lord then rain provisions from heaven, that this may be possible? The prophet answered him, Thou shalt see it with thy eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. That same evening four lepers, whose abode was at the entrance of the city, who had gone into the Syrian camp, reported that they had not seen a single man, nor heard a human voice in the camp, and they said, We only saw the horses and asses that were tied up; and the tents were

still fixed as usual. When this intelligence was brought to the king, he sent two horsemen who confirmed the report the four men had made. For the Lord had spread terror and consternation in the Aramean camp, and all the Syrians had fled. The people went forth and pillaged the camp, so that they bought a measure of fine flour for a shekel, and two measures of barley for the same price, as the man of God had predicted. But the officer on whose arm the king leant, and who was on guard at the gate of the city, was suffocated by the crowd who pressed through the gate, and he died, as the man of God had predicted.

XVI. JEHU, KING OF ISRAEL—HE CAUSES THE KINGS JORAM AND AHAZIAH, AS ALSO THE QUEEN ISEBEL, AND ALL THE DESCENDANTS OF THE HOUSE OF AHAB TO BE SLAIN—DESTRUCTION OF THE PRIESTS OF BAAL.

"Wo unto them who say of evil, It is good, and of the good, It is evil; who put darkness in the place of light, and light for darkness."—ISAIAH v. 20.

JEHORAM, the son of Jehoshaphat, was king of Judah. He did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord, as those of the house of Ahab, for he had for wife Athalia, the daughter of Ahab. After a reign of eight years he died, and his son Ahazia (Achaziah), by Athalia, succeeded him. He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, and did what was displeasing to the Lord; for he was allied with the house of Ahab. About that time

one of the disciples of the prophets went by order of Elisha to Ramoth-Gilead, and there anointed Jehu, one of the chiefs of the army, as king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I anoint thee king over Israel. And thou shalt destroy the house of Ahab, thy master; for I will avenge on Isebel the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord at the hand of Isebel. The dogs also shall eat Isebel in the valley of Yezreël, and she shall have no one to bury her. As soon as Jehu had related to his companions what had just passed, they blew the trumpet and exclaimed, Jehu is king. Jehu departed immediately with his followers for Yezreël, where were at that time Joram, king of Israel, and Ahazia, king of Judah. The two kings came out to meet Jehu, whom they overtook in the field of Naboth, the Yezreëlite. As soon as Joram perceived Jehu he cried to him, Bringest thou peace? to which he replied, What, peace! whilst the debaucheries and numerous witchcrafts of thy mother continue? and Joram turned his bridle and fled, crying to Ahaziah, There is treason, Ahaziah. But Jehu drew his bow with his full strength, and struck Joram between the shoulders, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sank down in his chariot. Jehu said to one of his captains, Cast him into the field of Naboth, the Yezreëlite; for remember that is the decree which the Lord pronounced against him, which we heard when we two were riding together after Ahab, his father. Jehu also pursued Ahaziah, who had fled; he was also mortally wounded, and died soon after at Megiddo. Jehu then went to Yezreël. Isebel having

learnt what had happened, she painted her eyebrows, adorned her head, and sat at the window where Jehu would pass; and as soon as he came into the city, she cried out, Is there peace, O Zimri, murderer of his lord? And he cast his eyes upward to the window and said, Who is for me? and two or three eunuchs looked out towards him, and he said to them, Throw her down! and they threw her down, and her blood was sprinkled upon the wall, and even the horses. Jehu then withdrew, and after eating and drinking, he said, Go see what hath become of that wicked woman, and bury her, for she is a king's daughter. They went, but found no more than the skull, the feet, and the hands. When he was told thereof he said, This is the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Elijah, the Tishbite, when he said, In the valley of Yezreël the dogs shall eat the flesh of Isebel. Jehu caused also to be put to death all the descendants of Ahab to the number of seventy, and also all his relatives, his courtiers, his priests, and all the prophets and priests of Baal. Jehu thus destroyed the worship of Baal from amidst Israel. Nevertheless, Jehu avoided not the sins which Jeroboam, son of Nebat, had committed, who had enticed Israel to sin by his evil ways; for he worshipped the golden calves of Bethel and Dan. After a reign of twenty-eight years Jehu died, and was buried at Samaria, and his son Jehoahaz succeeded him on the throne.

XVII. THE QUEEN ATHALIA—JEHOIADA, THE HIGH PRIEST, CONSPIRES AGAINST HER—JOASH, KING OF JUDAH—HIS UNHAPPY END AFTER THE DEATH OF JEHOIADA.

"He hath taken one of the royal seed, hath made a covenant with him, and hath bound him by an oath, so that it may be a debased kingdom and may not rise again, but by keeping his covenant it might stand."—EZEKIEL xvii. 13, 14.

ATHALIA, seeing that her son Ahaziah was dead, caused all the descendants of the royal race to be put to death. But Jehosheba, the sister of Ahaziah, and wife of the high priest Jehoïada took away Joash, the son of Ahaziah, from amidst the slaughter of the young princes, and kept him concealed in the house of the Lord for six years, during which Athalia reigned over the land. The seventh year Jehoïada assembled around him the rulers over hundreds, and the captains of the guard, and brought them into the temple, where he made a covenant with them, and having caused them to take an oath, he showed them the son of their late king. Then he gave them orders, assigned them the posts which they should occupy, and distributed among them King David's spears and shields, which were in the house of the Lord. After having placed guards at all the outlets of the temple, he caused the king's son to be brought forth; he then put the crown upon his head, and anointed him king. And all the people cheered and cried out, Long live the king! Athalia heard the cries of the people who ran, and mixing with them, entered the temple; but

when she saw the young king seated according to custom on the stand, and surrounded by the chiefs, and heard the cries of joy of the people, and the sound of the trumpets, she tore her garments and cried, Treason! treason! The high priest, Jehoïada, commanded the chiefs of the army, Bring her forth from out the temple, and let him that followeth her be put to death. The high priest would not permit that she should be slain in the house of the Lord. They seized her, made her return to the palace by the way of the entry of the king's horses, and there was she put to death. Jehoïada then made a covenant between the Lord, the king, and the people, so that the latter might ever be the people of the Lord; after which he made a treaty between the king and the people. And the people went into the temple of Baal, pulled down the altars, and broke the images of Baal, also Mattan, the priest of Baal, they slew before the altars. Then the king was conducted from the house of the Lord to the royal house, where he was seated on the throne of his ancestors. All the people rejoiced, and the city resumed its usual quiet. So Joash became king at the age of seven years. He did what was right in the sight of the Lord so long as he was instructed and led by the high priest Jehoïada. And Jehoïada died at the advanced age of one hundred and thirty years, and was buried in the royal sepulchre. After his death Judah fell again into sin; they forsook the temple of the Lord, and worshipped idols. Then the divine spirit came upon Zechariah, the son of Jehoïada, and he presented himself to the people, and said, Thus saith the Lord, Why do ye transgress the

commandments of the Lord? Ye shall therefore not prosper; for as ye have forsaken God, so will He forsake you. But a conspiracy was formed against him, and he was stoned by order of the king in the court of the house of the Lord, and as he died, he said, The Lord will see it and requite it. Thus Joash remembered not the great services which Jehoïada, the father of Zechariah, had rendered him. A year after, the Syrian army entered Jerusalem, plundered the city, and slew a great number of the chiefs of the people. Now the Syrians had come with a very small army; but the Lord delivered into their hands the very numerous army of Judah, because they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. The enemy even treated Joash with the greatest indignity. After this he fell grievously sick, when his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his bed. Thus died Joash after a reign of forty years. He was buried in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings; he was succeeded by his son Amaziah, he by Jotham, and he by Ahaz.

XVIII. END OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

A. M. 3206.

"The populous cities shall be laid waste; and the land shall become a solitude; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."—EZEKIEL xii. 20.

DURING the reign of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, the kingdom of Israel, was almost entirely overthrown by Hazael, King of Syria. Jehoahaz was succeeded by

his son Jehoash, who retook from the Syrians the cities taken by Hazael. Jeroboam the Second, succeeded his father Jehoash. This prince took Damascus from the Syrians. His son Zechariah was slain after a reign of a few months. After him, Shalum, then Menachem, Pekachia and Pekach, successively ascended the throne. The last was murdered by Hoshea, who usurped the kingdom. Whilst Hoshea, the son of Ela, reigned at Samaria over the kingdom of Israel, Shalmanesser, the King of Asshur (Assyria), made war upon him and compelled him to pay him tribute. Hoshea did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord, though not to so great an extent as those who had preceded him. The King of Asshur also discovered that Hoshea had formed a conspiracy against him, for he had sent messengers to Só, King of Egypt, and had not paid up the annual tribute. Shalmanesser had him arrested and put into prison. It was in the ninth year of the reign of Hoshea, that the King of Asshur invaded the country and took Samaria, after having besieged it three years. He removed the people to Assyria, where he assigned them towns in which to live, and sent the people of Assyria to inhabit the land of Israel. Thus did it befall the kingdom of Israel, because the people had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers, to worship idols; because they had despised the warnings and exhortations of the prophets of the Lord; and because, ever since their first King Jeroboam, they had violated the covenant which God had made with their fathers. Wherefore, the Lord was so incensed against them that He drove them away from before his face; and there remained in the land only the

tribes of Judah. As the strange people that then in habited the cities of Samaria worshipped not the Lord He sent among them lions which devoured great num bers of them. This was made known to the King o Asshur, who sent there a priest of Israel to teach thes people the worship of the Lord. Thus they adored th Lord; but they served also idols; they were at one an the same time worshippers of the only God and idolaters This was the case likewise with their children and thei descendants.

XIX. HEZEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH—MIRACULOUS DE LIVERANCE OF JERUSALEM AND THE KINGDOM O JUDAH—THE PROPHET ISAIAH—SANCHERIB.

"Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salva tion."—ISAIAH xlv. 17.

ABOUT this time, Hezekiah (Chiskia), son of Ahaz (great-grandson of Amazia, the son of Joash,) reigne over Judah. He did that which was right in the sigh of the Lord, as did David his forefather. He had a sin cere trust in the Lord the God of Israel, insomuch tha there was not one to be compared unto him among a the kings of Judah. He caused the high places to b put down, the idols to be broken, the groves to be up rooted, and the brazen serpent which Moses had mad to be broken in pieces, because the children of Israel ha heretofore offered incense unto it. He also continue faithfully attached unto the Lord, and followed all th commandments which the Lord had given to Moses

Wherefore the Lord was with him and he prospered in all that he did. He revolted against the King of Asshur and would no longer be subject unto him. He overcame also the Philistines and ravaged their country. It was in the fourth year of his reign that Shalmanesser, king of Asshur, conquered Samaria and the kingdom of Israel. And in the fourteenth year of his reign, Sancherib, the successor of Shalmanesser, invaded and took all the strong places of the kingdom of Judah. The King Hezekiah sent to Sancherib, saying, I have done wrong, but go away from me and I will do all that thou imposest on me. The King of Asshur compelled him to pay a tax of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. Hezekiah gave all the silver which was found in the temple and in the treasury of the king's house. However, some time after, Sancherib sent a considerable army against Jerusalem, and summoned the people to surrender the city and forsake the king. And thus said Rabshakeh, the envoy of Sancherib, who placed himself near the wall, Allow yourselves no longer to be misled by Hezekiah; for he has not the power to save you. Submit without resistance to the great king of Asshur, and it will be well for you all. He will lead you into a country similar to your own, into a country fertile in corn and in wine, which produceth the olive tree and honey; thus will you preserve your lives and will not perish. But the people were silent and answered him not a word, for the king had commanded them not to answer him.

Rabshakeh returned to Sancherib; who sent another message to Hezekiah, saying, Do not be misled by thy

God in whom thou trustest, and say not, Jerusalem shall not be surrendered into the power of the king of Asshur. Thou hast doubtless heard what the kings of Asshur have done in all other lands, by destroying them utterly; and thou pretendest thou will be delivered? Could the gods of the nations which my father destroyed save them? Such were the words contained in the letters sent to Hezekiah by the messenger of Asshur. After having read them, Hezekiah went into the house of the Lord and spread them open before the Lord, and offered the following prayer: O Lord! God of Israel, Thou alone art the ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth; Thou alone hast made the heaven and the earth. Bend thy ear, O Lord, and listen; open thy eyes and see; hear the words of Sancherib, who hath sent to blaspheme the living God. Yea, the kings of Asshur have destroyed the nations and ruined their lands; and they have cast into the fire the gods of those nations; for they were not gods but the works of men's hands, of wood and of stone. But now, Lord our God, do Thou save us from the hands of this king, that all the nations of the earth may know that Thou art the Lord God, that Thou alone art the God. Now the prophet Isaiah (Yeshayahu) sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel, I have heard thy prayer touching Sancherib, the king of Asshur; but he shall not enter the city; nor shoot an arrow at it; he shall not appear before it with a shield, neither shall he cast up a bank against it. He shall return by the way he came, and shall not enter into this city; for I will defend this city to save it for my own sake, and for the sake of David my servant. On the

same night an angel of the Lord went out and slew in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand men. When the day broke, the camp was filled with the corpses of those who had died over night. Then Sancherib withdrew and returned to Nineveh. One day while he was worshipping in the temple of his god, he was slain by his two sons, Adramelech and Sharetzer, who then escaped to the land of Ararat.

Some time after this, Hezekiah fell grievously ill. The prophet Isaiah, thereupon, came unto him and said, Thus saith the Lord, Put thy house in order, as thou art about to die. But Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and besought the Lord in these words: O Lord, remember, I beseech Thee, that I have walked before Thee in truth, and in the integrity of my heart, and that I have done what is right in thy eyes. And Hezekiah wept bitterly. Now Isaiah had not yet quitted the interior court of the palace, when the word of the Lord came again unto him, saying, Return and say unto Hezekiah the ruler of my people, Thus saith the Lord the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold, I will heal thee; on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord, and I will moreover add fifteen years unto thy life, and I will deliver thee, and this city from the power of the King of Asshur, and I will protect this city for my own sake and for the sake of David my servant. And Isaiah ordered dried figs to be placed on the swelling, and Hezekiah recovered his health. After a reign of twenty-nine years, Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and Menasseh his son reigned in his stead.

XX. MENASSEH—JOSIAH—THE PROPHETESS HULDA.

A. M. 3300.

"Hear the words of this covenant, and speak it to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; say unto them, Thus hath spoken the Lord, the God of Israel, Cursed be the man who will not obey the words of this covenant."—JEREMIAH xii. 2, 3.

"Do I then desire the death of the wicked? said the Lord God, only that he return and live?"—EZEK. xviii. 23.

Now Menasseh did evil in the eyes of the Lord; he even placed an idol in the temple of the Lord; he also led astray the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: so that they did likewise evil and no longer obeyed the laws and commandments of God. The Lord sent to admonish Menasseh and his people by his servants, the prophets; but they would not listen to them. So the Lord sent against them the army of the Assyrians, and they took Menasseh and carried him captive to Babel (Babylon). In the suffering and trouble of his captivity, Menasseh humbled himself before the Lord, the God of his fathers. He manifested a sincere repentance of his sins and implored the Lord with all his heart. The Lord heard him, and re-established him on the throne at Jerusalem. Then Menasseh acknowledged that the Lord was the true God. He extended the fortifications of the city of David, took away the idols from the temple, destroyed the altars of the false gods which he had caused to be made in Jerusalem; and he raised again the altar of the Lord, and offered thereon peace-

offerings and thank-offerings. He compelled the people also to the worship of the Lord. Menasseh died after a reign of fifty-five years. His son Amon, who succeeded him reigned only two years. His servants conspired against him and slew him in his palace. Josiah (Yoshiyahu) his son next ascended the throne. Josiah did that which was good in the eyes of the Lord, and followed, without turning, the ways of David his father. In the eighteenth year of his reign, as he had given orders to repair the temple, Shaphan, the scribe of the temple, came one day to render an account of the money received therein; when he said to the king, The high priest Hilkiah hath given me a book: and Shaphan read it unto the king. When the king had heard the words of the book of the law, he rent his garments, and commanded the high priest Hilkiah and several other high dignitaries of the state to go and inquire of the Lord for him and for all the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book which had just been found; because he said, The divine wrath which is kindled against us is great, because our fathers obeyed not the words of this book,* and did not what is prescribed therein. The high priest Hilkiah, with the other dignitaries, then went to the prophetess Hulda, who lived in Jerusalem, and

* During the long reign of Manasseh, and that of Amon, the law of God was entirely neglected, and was no longer read in the public assemblies. Whence the astonishment at the apparition of the sacred book so long forgotten. The King Joshiah, too young, and without any knowledge of the law, but penetrated with a very lively faith, must naturally have been terrified at the menaces which the Book of Moses contains against idolatry.

communed with her according to the King's commands. The prophetess answered them, saying, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you unto me, Thus saith the Lord, I will bring evil on this place and on its inhabitants, according to all the words of the book which the King of Judah hath read. Because that they have forsaken me and have offered incense unto strange gods, for the sake of making me angry with all the works of their hand; therefore is my wrath kindled against this place, and it shall not be extinguished. As to the King of Judah who sent you to consult me, say unto him, Thus saith the Lord concerning the words which thou hast heard; Inasmuch as thy heart was moved and thou didst humble thyself before the Lord, when thou didst hear what I have spoken concerning this place and its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and inasmuch as thou didst rend thy garments, and weep before me: so have I also hearkened unto thy prayer. Wherefore I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be buried in peace; and thy eyes shall not behold all the evil which I will bring over this place. This answer having been carried back to the King, he caused all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to assemble unto him; he then went with them and all the people, from the lowest to the highest, to the house of the Lord, where he read to them all the words of the book of the covenant which had been found in the house of the Lord. And the King stood upon an elevated stand and made a covenant before the Lord, promising thus to walk in the ways of the Lord, to observe with all their heart and all their soul His commandments, His testimonies, and His statutes, and to

fulfil all the words of the covenant written in that book. And all the people agreed to this covenant. After which the King commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second grade, and the door-keepers, to carry away from the temple of the Lord all the vessels which had been made for the worship of Baal and other idols, and he burnt them outside of Jerusalem, in the fields of Kidron. He exterminated also the priests of the idols, and thus purified from idolatry the temple, the city, and all the country. Then the king commanded the people, saying, Celebrate the Passover in honour of the Lord your God, as it is written in the book of the covenant. Never, from the time of the Judges, nor in the days of the kings of Israel and Judah, had the Passover been celebrated as it then was in Jerusalem, in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah. He exterminated also the soothsayers, and diviners, and banished the images and all the abominations which had hitherto been seen in Judah and Jerusalem. Before him there was not a king so attached to the Lord with all his heart, his soul, and his might, according to the precepts of Moses ; nor was there ever one like him since. It was in his days that Necho, the king of Egypt, advanced even to the river Euphrates to wage war with the king of Asshur. King Josiah marched against him, and was killed in an engagement near Megiddo. His servants conveyed his mortal remains to Jerusalem, and buried him with his fathers in the royal tombs. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah, and the prophet Jeremiah composed a lamentation on his death. He had reigned thirty-one years, and his son Jehoachaz succeeded him.

XXI. CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM AND DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR—BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY—DEATH OF GEDALIAH.

A. M. 3338.

"Many nations shall pass by this city, and one shall inquire of another, Why hath the Lord acted thus to this great city? And they shall be answered, Because they forsook the covenant of the Lord their God, and bowed themselves unto strange gods and worshipped them."—JEREM. xxii. 8, 9.

JEHOACHAZ did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord; he reigned, however, but three months; for Pharaoh Necho took him captive to Egypt, and placed Jehoïakim his brother, on the throne of Judah. He also did evil before the Lord. After his death, his son Jehoïachin, who succeeded him, followed in the same evil ways. He had reigned but three months when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came with a great army to besiege Jerusalem. He carried Jehoïachin, his mother, and all his court, captives to Babylon. He also carried away all the treasures of the temple and of the king's house, and broke up all the golden vessels which Solomon had made. He carried away out of Jerusalem all the principal inhabitants, and all the men capable of bearing arms, and took them captive to Babylon. Then he appointed as king of Judah, Zedekiah (Zidkiyahu), the the uncle of Jehoïachin. He was twenty-one years of age when he ascended the throne, and he reigned eleven years. But he did also that which was displeasing unto the Lord.

The Lord, incensed against Judah and Jerusalem, cast them off from his presence. Zedekiah, in the ninth year of his reign, rebelled against the king of Babylon; and on the tenth day of the tenth month* of the same year, Nebuchadnezzar came with all his army and laid siege to Jerusalem, and built entrenchments around the city. This siege, which lasted nearly two years, produced such a famine in the city that mothers devoured their own children, and men fell dead in the streets. The fourth day of the ninth month† the enemy made a breach in the wall. Zedekiah fled with all his warriors; but the Babylonians pursued them, and overtook them in the plains of Jericho, where they seized hold of him after his followers had dispersed themselves, and they led him before the king of Babylon, at Ribla. There sentence was pronounced on him; he was made to witness the punishment of his sons, who were slain before him, after which the Babylonians took out his eyes, loaded him with chains, and sent him a prisoner to Babylon. Soon after, on the seventh day of the fifth month, Nebuzaraddan, chief of the guards of Nebuchadnezzar, arrived at Jerusalem, burnt the temple, the king's palace, and all the splendid edifices, and razed the city to the

* The fast of the 10th Tebeth (עשרה בטבת) has been instituted in commemoration of the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem.

† The fast which recalls this event has been fixed on the 17th day of Tamuz (שבעה עשר בתמוז), because, at the time of the second temple, it was on this day that the Romans took Jerusalem, and moreover, this day has been remarkable for many other disasters which befell the nation.

ground.* He carried all the people captive unto Babylon, and left in Jerusalem only a few of the poorest class, to work in the fields and vineyards. Nebuzaraddan sent also to Babylon all the vessels of gold, silver, and copper, from the temple, also the two copper pillars which stood at the porch thereof. He took also Seraya, the high priest, several dignitaries, and sixty other persons, and carried them before the King of Babylon, at Ribla, who ordered them to be put to death. As to the people whom he left in the land, he placed as chief over them, Gedaliah, the son of Achikam. But in the seventh month, one Ishmaël, of the royal race, came with ten other men and slew Gedaliah, and the Jews and Chaldeans who were with him at Mitzpah:† upon which the remaining few fled to Egypt under the lead of Johannan, son of Koriah, against the advice of Jeremiah the prophet, whom they took with them.

In the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoïachin, king of Judah, Evil-Merodach, King of Babylon, who had just ascended the throne, took Jehoïachin from his dungeon, treated him with kindness, and gave him the chief place among the kings that were about him. He made them remove the garments he wore while in prison, and made him eat at his table. He assigned him, also, a pension, which he enjoyed all the remainder of his life.

* Notwithstanding, the 9th day of Ab (תשעה באב) is looked upon as the true day of the destruction of the temple. And the second temple was destroyed on the very same day by the Romans in the year 3830.

† The fast of the 3d of Tishri, (צום גדליה) has been instituted in memory of Gedaliah. It is the anniversary of his death.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

ספר דניאל

I. PIETY AND TEMPERANCE OF DANIEL AND HIS COMPANIONS.

In the third year of the reign of Jehoïakim, king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up against Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoïakim and a part of the sacred vessels into his hands, and he sent them into his own land, to Babylon, also called the land of Shinar, to the house of his god. Some time after, Nebuchadnezzar directed one of his officers to select several young Israelites of the royal race, or of illustrious birth, who might be without corporal defects, well made, intelligent, and capable of doing service in the king's house, and to teach them the language and writing of the Chaldeans. The king commanded also that they should be fed every day with meats and wines from his own table. They were to be thus trained during three years, and afterwards to fill some office in the king's household. Among the young men selected by the king's officer, were particularly distinguished Daniel, Chananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

all four of the house of Judah. Daniel, who had resolved in his heart not to defile himself by eating or drinking what came from the king's table, besought the officer to permit him not to defile himself in this manner. God so ordained it, that Daniel should obtain the good graces and favour of that officer. Nevertheless, he replied to Daniel, I fear the king, my master, who hath appointed your food and your drink. If he should perceive that ye are worse-looking than the other young men of your class, I should have to answer this offence committed through you with my head. Daniel then said, Try thy servants, I pray thee, for ten days; give us but vegetables to eat and water to drink; at the end thereof let our appearance be compared with that of the young men who eat from the king's table; after which, treat thy servants as it will seem best to thee. He consented, and tried them for ten days. At the end of the time he saw that they looked better and healthier than all those young men that ate the king's meats. The officer of the household then kept the meats and the wines for himself, but gave them vegetables, with which they supported themselves. But the Lord endowed these four young men with wisdom and understanding, so that they acquired the knowledge of all the writings and the sciences, and Daniel, in addition, understood how to interpret visions and dreams. At the time appointed the young men were presented to Nebuchadnezzar, and he found none to be compared to Daniel, Chananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and they were taken into the king's house to serve him. In whatever science the king questioned them, he found them ten times more intelligent than all

the magi and soothsayers of his empire. And Daniel remained in Babylon until the first year of the reign of Cyrus (Coresh).

II. DANIEL EXPOUNDS THE DREAM OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

Soon after, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams which very much troubled his mind. He sent for all the magi, the soothsayers, the astrologers, and the learned Chaldeans, that they might tell him the dream that he had had, and give him the interpretation thereof; for he had himself forgotten what he had dreamed. But they answered him, saying, Thou shouldst first tell us thy dream, and then we will tell thee the interpretation. Whereupon he commanded them anew, saying, If ye tell me not my dream, as well as its meaning, I will cause you to be cut in pieces, and your houses to be razed. They answered again, Let our master and king vouchsafe to tell us first his dream, and we will interpret it afterwards; for there is not on the earth a man who can do what the king requireth: the thing is impossible. The gods alone, whose dwelling is not among mortals, can execute the king's orders. Then a violent anger seized the king, and he ordered all the sages of Babylon to be put to death. This decree was immediately put into execution; already several had perished, and they were seeking for Daniel and his companions to deliver them over to death. Daniel, on hearing of this terrific decree, interrogated Arioch, the captain of the guard, as to the cause thereof; and when he was informed, he went in unto the king

and prayed him to give him time, and that he would pledge himself to give the king the explanation of his dream. Then Daniel went and sought his companions, and acquainted them with what had transpired, and recommended them to address to God a fervent prayer to reveal this secret, so that they might not perish with the other sages of Babylon. Shortly after, this secret was unveiled to Daniel in a vision during the night; Daniel returned thanks unto the God of heaven, and spoke as followeth, May the name of God be praised from eternity to eternity, for to Him alone belong wisdom and power. It is He who changeth times and seasons; He casteth down kings and raiseth up others; He giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to those who have understanding. It is He who revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth what is hid in the darkness; for light dwelleth with him. I return Thee thanks, O God of my fathers, and I praise Thee who hast given me wisdom and strength, inasmuch as Thou hast made known to me what I have prayed to Thee for, and hast made known to me that which concerneth the king. Then Daniel was conducted at his request before the king, who said to him, Art thou able to tell me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation? And Daniel answered, The secret which the king desireth to know is of that kind which neither the sages, the magi, nor the diviners can explain to the king; but there is in heaven a God who maketh known that which is hidden, and He discloseth to the King Nebuchadnezzar that which will happen in times yet far distant. As for me, it is not by any peculiar wisdom superior to that of all

other living men that this secret hath been revealed to me, but by the will of God that I might tell thee the interpretation, and thou mightest know the secret thoughts of thy heart. This then, O king, is what thou sawest in thy dream: It seemed to thee that a great image stood before thee. This image, of an extraordinary brilliancy and a frightful aspect, had a head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly and the thighs of copper, the legs of iron, and the feet partly of iron and partly of clay. Thou beheldest likewise a stone that became loosened without a man's hand to touch it, and which smote the image in its feet of iron and clay, and broke it to pieces, in such a manner that the gold, silver, copper, and iron became shivered and dispersed by the wind, as chaff, so that there remained no traces thereof; whilst the stone became a great mountain which extended over the whole earth. This is the dream, and now I will tell the king its interpretation: Thou, O king, art the king of kings, because the God of heaven hath given thee a mighty kingdom, power, and glory; thou art the head of gold. After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thine, then a third one, which shall be of copper, which shall rule over all the earth. Afterwards shall arise a fourth kingdom, which, like unto iron, shall break and reduce all kingdoms. As for the feet which thou didst see, that the toes were partly iron and partly clay, this signifieth that this kingdom shall be divided, and that one part shall be strong, and the other weak. At the time of these kings, the God of heaven shall in the end raise up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; but, like unto the stone which thou

sawest, it shall destroy all these kingdoms and shall exist for ever. Thus hath the Most High God caused the king to see what shall happen in the days to come. When King Nebuchadnezzar heard this, he fell with his face to the ground, and bowed himself before Daniel, and commanded presents and incense to be offered to him. And he said to Daniel, Truly your God is the God of gods, the Ruler of all kings, the Revealer of secret things, since He hath given thee the power of unveiling this mystery. Afterwards the king loaded Daniel with very great honours, gave him numerous magnificent presents, and appointed him governor of the province of Babylon, and ruler over the sages of the land. At the recommendation of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, as Chananiah, Mishaël, and Azariah, were called in Chaldean, the companions of Daniel, were appointed judges in the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at court about the person of the king.

III. THE THREE MEN IN THE FURNACE.

"The Lord is the prop of the righteous, their strength in the time of troubles. The Lord will help them, and deliver them from the wicked, because they trust in Him."—PSALM xxxvii. 39, 40.

KING Nebuchadnezzar erected a very high image of gold in the plain of Dura, in the country of Babylon. And he gave orders to all the chiefs and high officers of his kingdom to assemble and celebrate the feast of the dedication of the image erected by the king. On the

appointed day all the chiefs and high officers of the kingdom assembled to celebrate the dedication of the image newly erected, and a herald cried out in a loud voice, Hear, all ye people, nations and languages; ye are commanded that as soon as ye hear the sound of the cornet and other musical instruments, ye shall fall down and bow yourselves before the image which King Nebuchadnezzar hath set up; and he who doth not fall down and bow himself shall be thrown into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Soon after, the cornet and other instruments sounded, and all present threw themselves on the ground, and bowed down before the image. A little time after certain Chaldeans came unto the king, and accused the Jews, saying, May the king live for ever! Thou hast commanded, O king, that at the given signal everybody should fall down and bow himself before the golden image, but that he who doeth not so shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Now there are certain Jews named Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, who have not regarded thy orders, O king; for they honour not the gods, and have not bowed down before the golden image. Nebuchadnezzar's anger was then inflamed against them, and he ordered that these three men should be directly brought before him. They appeared before him, and he said, Is it true that ye honour not my gods, and that ye bow not down before the image which I have erected? I command you now that as soon as ye shall hear the cornet and other musical instruments, ye shall fall down and bow before the image which I have made;

but if ye refuse, ye shall be immediately cast into the burning fiery furnace; and what god can deliver you from my power? But these men answered the king thus, It is not proper for us to answer thee concerning this decree; yet know that the God whom we adore can deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us also from thy power; but even if He were not to do so, we declare unto thee that we will not honour thy gods, and will not bow down unto the image which thou hast erected. Then Nebuchadnezzar became furious, and commanded to cast these three men into the burning fiery furnace, and to heat it sevenfold more than it was at that moment. Immediately they seized them, bound them, and cast them into the flaming furnace, which was so highly heated that the flames laid hold of and burnt up those who executed this cruel order. But soon Nebuchadnezzar rose astonished and affrighted from his seat, and said to his servants, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? And they answered, and said, Yea, O king. But he said, Nevertheless, I now behold four men unbound, walking freely in the midst of the fire without showing the least hurt, and the fourth hath a divine aspect. Nebuchadnezzar then drew nigh to the mouth of the furnace, and exclaimed, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the Most High God, come out and come hither. And when they came forth the officers and their assistants assembled around them, and saw with astonishment that the flames had been powerless on their bodies; neither their hair nor their clothes were scorched, and there was not even a smell of fire, or burn. Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke

and said, Praised be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel to save his servants, who, trusting in Him, have disobeyed the king's orders, and have yielded over their bodies to the flames rather than honour and adore any other god except their one God. Now I command that all men, be they who they may, and of whatsoever country, who shall be guilty of speaking anything amiss against the God of these men shall be cut in pieces, and their house reduced to ashes. For there is no other god who can effect such a deliverance. As to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the king raised them to the highest dignities.

IV. DESPATCH OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF HIS KINGDOM.

"Man, though surrounded by honours, if he understandeth not is like the beasts that perish."—PSALM xlix. 21.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth, Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

I, Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Therefore made I a decree to

bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers; and I told the dream before them, but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

But at the last, Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, and before him I told the dream, saying, O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof. Thus were the visions of my head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches. Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven;

and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth. Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him, and let seven times pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. This dream, I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation; but thou art able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.

Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The King spoke, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream or the interpretation thereof trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thy enemies. The tree that thou sawest, which grew and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth,—whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: it is thou, O King, that art grown and become strong; for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. And whereas the King saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots

thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him: this is the interpretation, O King, and this is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king. That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots: thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O King, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thy iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

All this came upon the King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The King spoke, and said, Is not this the great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that

the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar, and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. And at the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and whose kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and whose ways are just; and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.

V. DANIEL EXPLAINS THE MYSTERIOUS WORDS WHICH A MIRACULOUS HAND HAS TRACED ON THE WALL IN THE PALACE OF BELSHAZZAR.

King Belshazzar, (the son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar,) once gave a great feast to his numerous

courtiers. Whilst he was drinking wine, he ordered his servants to bring the vessels of gold and silver which his father had brought out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, so that the king, his courtiers, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therefrom. They brought the sacred vessels; and the king, his courtiers, his wives, and his concubines, drank out of them and sang hymns in praise of their idols. But at the same time appeared fingers as of a man's hand, which traced some words on the wall, opposite the chandelier, which hung in the hall of the feast. When the King perceived the handwriting, his face became pale; his thoughts troubled him; and his knees shook one against the other; and he cried aloud, to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers! They soon came; and the king said unto them, Whosoever can read that writing and tell me its meaning, shall be clothed in scarlet and have a golden chain about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. But not one of the wise men could read the writing or expound it. The king was then seized with affright, and his countenance became changed, and his courtiers were equally affrighted. The queen having heard thereof, came into the banquet hall, and said, O King, live for ever! Let not thy mind be troubled, nor let thy countenance change; there is in thy kingdom a man in whom is a divine spirit, and whom thy father Nebuchadnezzar appointed chief of all the sages, because he was found to be full of wisdom and all knowledge, and knew how to interpret dreams, and to solve the greatest difficulties, and whom the king named Belteshazzar; now let Daniel be sent for, and he

will give thee the interpretation of the writing. When Daniel came, the king said to him, Among all the wise men and astrologers there is not one that can read and explain to me this writing; but I have heard that thou knowest how to unveil mysteries and solve difficulties; now if thou canst read and expound to me this writing, thou shalt be clothed in scarlet, and have a chain of gold around thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom. Daniel answered the king, Keep thy gifts for thyself, and give thy rewards to others; nevertheless, I will read this writing and give thee its interpretation. Know, O king, that God, the Most High, gave thy father Nebuchadnezzar power, majesty, glory and honour; so that all people trembled before him; he could, at his will, take life or deliver from death; raise up or put down as it pleased him. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was hurled from his kingly throne and deprived of his glory, and he was driven from human society, and he dwelled with the beasts of the field; he was fed on grass and his body was moistened with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the most high God ruleth over all human powers, and that He disposeth according to His will, power and dominion. Nevertheless, thou Belshazzar, his son, hast not humbled thy heart though thou knowest all this; but thou hast rebelled against the Lord of heaven; and thou didst order to be brought before thee the vessels of his house, and thou and thy courtiers and thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine therefrom, singing in praise of thy idols, who see not, hear not, and know not; whilst thou glorifiest not the

true God, in whose hands thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways. Wherefore hath He sent the hand to write these words. And this is what was written: MENE MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN. Now this is its interpretation: MENE MENE, God hath numbered the days of thy reign, and hath fixed its end; TEKEL, Thou hast been weighed in the balance (that is, thy actions), and hast been found wanting; UPHARSIN, Thy kingdom shall be snatched from thee and shall be given to the Medes and Persians. Belshazzar then commanded, and they clothed Daniel in scarlet, and they put a golden chain about his neck, and he was proclaimed third ruler in the kingdom. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.*

VI. DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN.

"The righteous is delivered from trouble, and the wicked is put in his place."—PROV. xi. 8.

AT the time that Darius, King of Media, reigned over Babylon, he deemed it advisable to establish one hundred and twenty satraps to administer justice in the provinces of his empire, and he appointed three presidents (vizirs), to whom the satraps were to give an account of their administration, so that the kingdom might suffer no damage. Daniel was one of these three presidents. Daniel, by reason of his superior understanding, sur-

* According to profane history, on this same night the Persians, under Cyrus, took possession of Babylon.

passed all the other satraps and presidents, so that the king thought of placing him at the head of his kingdom. The satraps and the presidents envied him, and sought to find some charge; but they could find no occasion or fault, because he was very faithful, and no negligence or error was discovered in him. They then said one to the other, We shall find no means to accuse Daniel, unless we find it against him through the law of his God. So the presidents and satraps went together to the king, and said to him, Long live King Darius! All the grand functionaries of the state have agreed to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall address any petition to any god or man, till the end of thirty days, except it be to thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, confirm this decree, and sign the writing containing it, that it be not changed, according to the law of Media and Persia, which cannot be revoked. The king then signed the decree and prohibition. Nevertheless, Daniel returned into his house as usual, the windows of his chamber looking towards Jerusalem, and he knelt there three times every day and offered up his prayers and thanks to his God, as he had been accustomed to. Now these men came suddenly upon Daniel, and surprised him in prayer and supplication before his God, and they went immediately and denounced him to the king, saying, Daniel, one of the Jewish captives, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree which thou hast signed; he prayeth three times every day. The king, however, was sorely grieved when he heard this, and took a firm resolution to save Daniel. And he gave himself much

anxiety until evening how to deliver him. But these men insisted strongly with the king, and urged him on by saying, Thou knowest, O king, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians every decree or statute signed by the king cannot be revoked. So the king ordered them to bring Daniel, and to cast him into the lion's den; but the king said to Daniel, May the God whom thou hast continually served deliver thee. Then a stone was brought and placed upon the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own seal, and with the seal of the high functionaries, so that nothing might be changed with regard to Daniel. Then the king, returning to his palace, passed the night fasting, had no musical instruments played before him, and sleep fled from him. The king then arose very early in the morning, and went in haste to the lion's den, and when he drew nigh he said in a plaintive voice to Daniel, Daniel, servant of the living God, hath thy God whom thou hast continually served, been able to save thee from the lions? And Daniel answered him, O king, live for ever! God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, for I have been found innocent before Him, and because towards thee, O king, I have not done any wrong. The king thereupon was exceedingly glad, and commanded immediately to bring Daniel out from the lion's den. They brought him out, but they found not the slightest scratch about him; for he had trusted in his God. Then the king commanded them to bring the men who had accused Daniel; and he had them cast into the den of lions, with all that belonged to them. Scarcely had they

touched the bottom of the den when the lions leapt upon them and tore them to pieces. Darius then sent a letter to all the people, nations, and languages, in these terms, May your prosperity be multiplied! I command that in the whole extent of my dominions, men shall tremble before and fear the God of Daniel. He is the living God, and existing for ever, and His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed, and His dominion is to the end of things; He delivereth and rescueth, He worketh signs and miracles in heaven and on earth, and it is He who hath saved Daniel from the power of the lions. The prosperity of Daniel was no more disturbed, and he lived happily through the reigns of Darius and Cyrus.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

מגלת אסתר

I. ESTHER, THE ADOPTED DAUGHTER OF MORDECAI, BECOMES THE WIFE OF AHASUERUS, (ACHASHVEROSH.)

A. M. 3400.

"The heart of kings is in the hands of the Lord as a river of water; He turneth it withersoever He will."—PROV. xxi. 1.

AT the time of Ahasuerus, King of Persia and Media, who reigned over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, there lived in Shushan, his capital, a man of the Jewish nation of the tribe of Benjamin; his name was Mordecai: he had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had banished to Chaldea. He had adopted Esther, his uncle's daughter; for her father and mother were dead. The young girl was handsome and of a fine figure, and on the death of her parents, Mordecai had taken her as his daughter. When, by a decree of the king, a great number of young women were gathered together in the capital, Esther was also taken there. She pleased and found favour with all who saw her,

and they soon gave her, as was customary, seven maidens from the palace, and she was distinguished more than all the others. Now she never declared either her people or the place of her birth; for Mordecai had ordered her not to say a word about it. Now Mordecai walked every day before the court of the palace of the women, to learn of Esther's health, and what had become of her. When Esther's turn to appear before the king arrived, which was in the seventh year of the reign of Ahasuerus, in the tenth month, Tebeth, she was taken to the palace of the king. He preferred her over all the women; he found her so filled with graces that he placed the royal crown on her head, and proclaimed her queen in the place of Vashti, who had been dethroned, because she had refused to obey the king's orders. The king made on the occasion a great feast for all his officers and servants, as the nuptial feast of Esther; he released the provinces from the usual tax, and bestowed gifts with royal munificence. Esther still kept silence concerning her birth and her people, as Mordecai had commanded her, and she still continued to obey him as when she was under his fostering care. Mordecai, however, kept near the court. One day he overheard accidentally, while sitting near the king's gate, two officers of the court, Bigthan and Teresh, conspiring to take away the king's life. He sent an account thereof to the queen, and she related it to the king in Mordecai's name. The matter was thereupon investigated and found to be true. The two conspirators were hung, and the circumstance was recorded in the Book of Chronicles of the kingdom.

II. HAMAN—HIS PROJECTS AGAINST THE JEWS.

"A righteous man who falleth down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and as a corrupt spring."—PROV. xxv. 24.

AFTER this event the king raised to a very high rank Haman, of the seed of Agag, and placed him above all the other officers of the empire. All the servants of the king bent the knee and bowed down before Haman; for the king had so commanded it; but Mordecai alone would not bow down, nor bend the knee. Then the officers of the court called Haman's attention to the fact, that Mordecai had not bowed down before him, and Haman was highly incensed thereat. And he disdained to punish Mordecai alone; for they had told him what Mordecai's nation was; and he sought therefore to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the kingdom of Ahasuerus, the people of Mordecai. In the month of Nissan, in the twelfth year of the reign of Ahasuerus, Haman cast lots to discover the day and month of the whole year most favourable to his designs, and the lot fell on the twelfth month, which is Adar. So Haman went thereupon to the king, and said, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the other nations in all the provinces of thy kingdom; their laws are diverse from those of every other nation, and they obey not the king's laws, therefore it is not advantageous to the king to tolerate them. If it please the king, let an edict be written that they may be destroyed, and I will pay into the royal treasury ten thousand talents of

silver. The king immediately pulled his ring from his finger and gave it to Haman, and said, I leave thee the money, and I give up this people unto thee, to do with them as thou pleasest. The scribes of the king were then called, and they wrote, by Haman's orders, to the satraps and governors of the provinces; and the letters were sealed with the royal signet, and sent by couriers to all the provinces. These letters contained the order to exterminate all the Jews, old and young, women and children, and to plunder their goods. The day of the slaughter was fixed for the thirteenth day of the month Adar. This edict was also published in Shushan. Yet the king and Haman sat down to feast, while in all the city there were consternation and grief. In all the provinces and all the places where this cruel edict of the king was published, there were mourning, fasting, weeping and wailing among the Jews. Many used sackcloth and ashes instead of their usual beds. When Mordecai heard what had passed, he tore his garment, clothed himself in sackcloth, and covered his head with ashes; and he walked through the city uttering loud and bitter cries. In this state he appeared before the gates of the king's palace. When the maidens and servants of Esther told her of it she was much frightened, and sent immediately clothing that Mordecai might clothe himself therewith, and to remove his sackcloth; but he refused to take them. Then Esther called Hatach, whom the king had given her to serve her, and told him to go and inquire of Mordecai what all this meant. Hatach then went out to Mordecai, and he related to him all the evil designs of Haman against the Jews, and all

that had happened; he gave Hatach, at the same time, a copy of the royal edict, to show it to Esther, and he requested her to go and seek the king, and intercede with him for her people. Hatach having reported to Esther what Mordecai had said, she charged him to go back and say to Mordecai, All the servants of the king and all the people of the kingdom know that whosoever entereth into the interior court of the palace without being called, incurreth the penalty of death, unless the king extend towards him his golden sceptre, by which his life is saved; and as for myself, I have not been called before the king these thirty days. When Mordecai heard these words of Esther he sent to tell her, Think not because thou art in the king's house, that thou alone wilt escape of all the Jews; for if thou now keep silence, help and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house may perish; and who knoweth if it was not for this that thou hast become queen? Then Esther sent to say to Mordecai, Go, assemble all the Jews that are in Shushan, and let them fast for me, and eat not and drink not for three days and three nights; and I also with my maidens will fast thus, after which, though it be contrary to law, I will go unto the king, and if I am to perish let me perish. And Mordecai went and did as Esther had commanded him.*

* This is the origin of the Fast of Esther, (תענית אסתר) still observed to this day on the thirteenth day of the month Adar.

III. ESTHER INTERCEDES FOR HER PEOPLE—FALL OF HAMAN.

"He that diggeth a pit shall fall therein himself: and the stone shall return on him who hath rolled it."—PROV. xxvi. 27.

ON the third day Esther clothed herself in her royal robes, and went and stood in the interior court of the palace, opposite the king's apartment. The king was at the time seated on his throne fronting the door of the palace. When he saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she found favour in his eyes, and he extended towards her his golden sceptre, and Esther drew near and touched the top of the sceptre. The King then asked her, What wilt thou, Queen Esther? and what is thy request? even if it concern the half of my kingdom it shall be given thee. And Esther answered, If it please the king I wish that he might come to-day with Haman, to the feast which I have prepared for him. And the king ordered immediately, that Haman should be brought, that the queen's will might be gratified. So the king and Haman came to the feast which Esther had prepared. During the repast, the king said again to Esther, What is thy petition, and it shall be granted thee; and what is the request, even if it concern the half of my kingdom it shall be performed. And the queen answered, If I have found grace in the eyes of the king, and if it please him to grant my petition and to perform my request, let the king come with Haman to

the feast which I will prepare, and to-morrow then, I will do as the king hath said.

Now Haman withdrew joyful and happy. But when he saw Mordecai at the palace gate, and that he neither rose up nor made way for him, he was filled with anger. On his return home, he said to his wife Zeresh and his friends, All my prosperity, glory, and riches, are of no value in my sight so long as I see Mordecai the Jew, sitting at the king's gate. But his wife and friends replied, Let them make a gallows fifty cubits high, and ask the king to-morrow to hang Mordecai thereon; then thou canst go with a joyful heart to the feast with the king. This advice pleased Haman, and he had the gallows made.

That very night, the king being unable to sleep, he asked to have read to him the book containing the remarkable events of his reign; and as they were reading it before the king, it was found inscribed that Mordecai had once denounced two of the king's servants who had conspired to attempt the king's life. The king then said, What honour and what dignity have been shown to Mordecai for this? And his servants answered, Nothing hath been done unto him. By this time it was morning, and the king asked, Who is in the court? And Haman had come to ask the king for permission to hang Mordecai on the gallows which he had prepared for him. The king's servants then said, Haman is in the court; when the king said, Let him come. The king then said to him, What should be done to a man whom the king desires especially to honour? But Haman said to himself, Whom should the king desire

to honour more than myself? He therefore said, Let the royal robe which the king wore, and the horse on which he rode on the day of his coronation be brought forth; let the robe and the horse be given into the hands of one of the noble officers, and let him clothe therewith the man whom the king desireth to honour, and let him make him ride on the horse through the principal streets of the city, and cry out before him, So shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour. The king then said to him, Make haste, and take the robe and horse, as thou hast said, and do thus unto Mordecai the Jew, who sitteth at the King's gate; omit nothing of all that thou hast said. So Haman took the robe, and the horse, and he clothed Mordecai, and made him ride on the horse through the principal streets of the city, and cried out before him, So must it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour. After this, Mordecai returned to the king's gate; but Haman returned to his house downcast, and covered with shame. He was relating to Zeresh, his wife, and his friends, what had just happened, when the king's servants came to summon him quickly to the feast which Esther had prepared. The king and Haman being come to Esther's feast, the king said to her, Whatever be thy request, Queen Esther, shall be given to thee, and what thou desirest, even to the half of my kingdom, shall be done. Esther then replied, If I have found favour in thy eyes, O king, and if it please thee, let my life be granted me upon my request, and the lives of my people upon my petition. For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to be blotted out; and if

we had been only sold as slaves and maid-servants, I should have been silent; but the oppressor hath not even considered the loss he would inflict upon the King. Then the King spoke to Queen Esther, Who is he and where is he who hath had the presumption to act thus? And Esther replied, A cruel and vindictive enemy; this wicked Haman! But Haman became terrified in the presence of the king and queen. The king, filled with passion, quitted the festive board and went into the palace garden; but Haman stayed behind to plead for his life with Esther the queen, for he saw that the king had firmly resolved on his injury. Soon after, the king returned to the festive board, at the moment that Haman had cast himself on the cushion on which Esther was sitting; the king thereupon said, Will he even commit violence on the queen in my own house! As the word issued from the King's mouth, they covered Haman's face. Then Harbonah, one of the king's servants, said unto him, Behold, also, there is in Haman's house, a gallows fifty cubits in height, which he hath erected for Mordecai, who spoke for the welfare of the King. And the king said, Hang him thereon. They thereupon hung Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the king's anger was pacified.

IV. FEAST OF PURIM—ELEVATION OF MORDECAI.

"The voice of joy and deliverance is as the dwellings of the righteous."—PSALM cxviii. 15.

WHEN Esther informed the king of the ties which bound her to Mordecai, the king sent for him and gave

unto him the ring which he had taken from Haman. Esther appointed Mordecai superintendent over Haman's house, which the king had given her. At Esther's prayer, they immediately despatched orders which Mordecai had caused to be written by the king's orders, in his name and sealed with his signet, to revoke the edict issued by Haman against the Jews. These letters, directed to all the satraps, governors of provinces and the Jews, commanded the latter to join together in defence of their lives, and to deliver themselves from their enemies. A similar edict was likewise published in Shushan. Mordecai, on quitting the king's presence, was clothed in purple, and the city of Shushan was filled with joy and happiness. In all the provinces and the cities where the royal edict came, there were joy and gladness, holiday and feasting for the Jews. But the thirteenth day of Adar, on which the enemies of the Jews had expected to crush them, was changed into a day of joy for the Jews, who triumphed over their enemies everywhere; and none did stand before them. Everywhere the satraps and governors of provinces exalted the Jews, for Mordecai had inspired them all with terror; because Mordecai stood very high in the king's house, and his fame had spread over all the provinces; and he became continually greater. The Jews of Shushan celebrated the fifteenth, and the Jews of the other cities celebrated the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, as a day of merry-making, joy, and festivity, and in sending presents one to another. Mordecai wrote down all these events, and sent to all the Jews of the kingdom of Ahasuerus letters, requiring them to celebrate every year the

fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar, as the days on which their mourning and troubles were changed into gladness, to consecrate them to joy and festivity, and sending presents one to another,* and distributing alms among the poor. These days have been called PURIM, from PUR, (lot,) which Haman, the persecutor of the Jews, had cast to destroy them. The Jews then established it as a law unto them and their descendants, to celebrate the two days at the time, and according to the manner prescribed in the letters of Mordecai, and also the fast and the proper prayer. Therefore, these days of Purim will never be abolished among the Jews, and their memorial will never be extinguished among their descendants. Mordecai became the second in rank in the kingdom of Ahasuerus, and the greatest man of his nation; he was beloved by all his brethren, merciful unto his people, and seeking the welfare and peace of all his race.

* The custom is followed to this day under the name שלח מנות "sending of presents."

THE BOOKS OF EZRA AND NECHEMIAH.

ספר עזרא ונחמיה

I. END OF THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY — ZERUBABEL LEADS BACK A PART OF THE JEWS TO JERUSALEM, AND RESTORES THE WORSHIP THERE.

"When the seventy years shall have been ended, I will visit the King of Babel."—JEREMIAH xxv. 12.

IN the first year of the reign of Cyrus (Coresh), the king of Persia, the Lord, in order to accomplish the word which He had spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah, inspired the King of Persia, Cyrus, with the idea of issuing the following proclamation over his whole kingdom, and also in writing, Thus saith Cyrus, the king of Persia, The Lord, the God of Heaven, hath placed under my rule all the kingdoms of the earth, and He hath ordered me to build Him a house in Jerusalem which is Judea. Now whoever there is among you belonging to His people, may God be with them, and let him go up unto Jerusalem, which is Judea, and build the temple of the Lord the God of Israel, who is the God that is in Jerusalem. As to those Israelites who shall have to remain

in the places they now occupy, their townsmen shall assist them by gifts of gold and silver, and all other goods and cattle, besides that which they may offer voluntarily for the house of God at Jerusalem. So the heads of the families of Judah and Benjamin, the priests and the Levites, and also those whose heart had been touched by God, set out on their journey to return to Jerusalem, to build there the temple of the Lord. All the inhabitants around assisted them with gold, silver, and other valuable things, and cattle, besides all the voluntary gifts towards the building of the house. King Cyrus also restored all the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away from Jerusalem, and which had been placed in the temple of his idols. These vessels of gold and silver numbered five thousand and four hundred, and were given in charge to Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah, who carried them to Jerusalem. Among the remarkable men of Judah who returned to the land of Israel, were particularly distinguished Zerubabel and the priest Jeshua. Those who set out with them amounted to forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, besides the male and female servants, whose number was seven thousand three hundred and thirty. They were accompanied by two hundred singers, male and female. As soon as they had arrived, the heads of the families took the necessary steps for the building of the temple, to which each contributed by a voluntary tax according to his means. They settled themselves in the towns. And when the seventh month (Tishri) was come, all the nation assembled at Jerusalem. The high-priest Jeshua and the

priests, and Zerubabel and his brethren, set themselves to build the altar of the God of Israel, to offer thereon sacrifices, according to the statutes of the law of Moses the man of God. Then they celebrated the feast of Tabernacles, as it is commanded, and offered the daily sacrifices.

II. COMMENCEMENT OF THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE — THE JEWS ARE COMPELLED TO STOP THEIR WORK, WHICH IS NOT RESUMED UNTIL THE REIGN OF DARIUS.

In the second month of the second year of the return from the captivity of Babylon, they laid the foundations of the temple. While the labourers were working at the foundation, the Levites sang, to the sound of trumpets and cymbals, hymns and psalms in praise of the Lord. And they said, Give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good, and His grace endureth for ever unto Israel. Now a great number of the older priests and the heads of families, who had seen the first temple in its splendour, wept loudly while they were laying the foundation of the second temple; whilst many lifted up their voices with shouts of joy.

When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin, (the Assyrians settled in the land,) learned that those who had returned from the captivity were building the temple of the Lord, they came unto Zerubabel and to the heads of the families, and said unto them, Let us take part in the building, for like you we will seek your God; for we

have offered sacrifices unto Him ever since the days of Aysar Haddon, the king of Assyria, who brought us hither. But as Zerubabel and the heads of Israel would not permit them, these men endeavoured to hinder and trouble the Israelites in their labour; and at the beginning of the reign of Ahasuerus they even sent accusations against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. They did the same in the reign of Artachshashtah, (Artaxerxes,) to whom these enemies sent accusations against them, after which an order arrived to discontinue the building of the temple. The work was thus suspended until the second year of the reign of Darius. Then it was that Zerubabel and the high priest Jeshua began again their labour for the building of the temple. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah, who then prophesied in Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, lent them their aid and assistance. Nevertheless, new enemies arose; but having read in the chronicles of his kingdom, with what kindness Cyrus had behaved towards the children of Israel, and how highly he was in favour of the reconstruction of the temple, King Darius issued orders that the temple building should be immediately proceeded with, without any impediment. He likewise gave orders to furnish the Jews, from the royal revenues of the west side of the Euphrates, with all that they might require for the building of the temple, and to supply them with cattle required for the sacrifices, as also with wheat, wine and oil, as much as the priests of Jerusalem might ask for, "so that they should," as the edict said, "offer the suitable sacrifices to the God of heaven, and address their prayers to Him for the wel-

fare of the king and his children. And whosoever shall dare to disobey the execution of this decree, his house shall be razed to the ground and himself hanged on the spot. And may the God whose name dwelleth there (in Jerusalem) cast down every king and nation who shall lay their hand on the temple to destroy, or to injure the same. I, Darius, give this decree."

In the sixth year of the reign of Darius, the third day of the month Adar, the building was finished. And the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, and all who had returned from the captivity, celebrated with thanksgiving and joy the feast of its dedication. They offered, as sacrifices, one hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, and four hundred sheep; and for a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. The priests and the Levites were reinstalled in their sacred functions, according as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God. Then those who had returned from the captivity, celebrated the feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) with great rejoicings; for the Lord had given them joy, in granting them favour in the eyes of the king, so that he assisted them in the building of the temple of the Lord.

III. ARRIVAL OF THE PRIEST EZRA.

In the seventh year of the reign of Artachshashta, the priest Ezra departed from Babylon to return to Jerusalem. He was a man well learned in the law of Moses, and the king had granted him all that he had

asked, according to the power of the Lord over him. Now Ezra had turned his heart to search in the law of the Lord, to practise it, and to teach in Israel the statutes and the commandments. Many Israelites, priests, Levites, and singers went up with him. The king gave him a written decree, in which he permitted every Israelite that chose to do so, to return to Jerusalem. This letter, moreover, ordained that whatever money Ezra might want should be supplied him from the royal treasury in the land of Israel, and gave him authority to institute judges and officers of justice among his people, and to punish whomsoever that should transgress the laws of God or of the king. Ezra returned thanks unto the Eternal, saying, Be praised, O Lord, God of our fathers, who hast inspired thus the heart of the king to restore the glory of Thy temple in Jerusalem; and who hast given me favour in the eyes of the king and his counsellors and officers, so that, by the assistance of the Lord, my God, the favour was granted me of leading back with me to Jerusalem a great many of the principal men of Israel.

After Ezra had arrived at Jerusalem, and having placed there the gold and silver, and vessels destined for the temple service, those who had just then returned from captivity offered sacrifices unto the Lord. But as soon as Ezra learnt that a great number of the Israelites had intermixed with the people of the adjoining nations, by taking their daughters for wives, he was much afflicted, and became sorely grieved. He rent his garments, sat down sorrowful and with bent head, and fasted until evening. When they offered the evening sacrifice, he

knelt, stretched his hands towards heaven, and prayed thus, O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face unto Thee, my God; for our iniquities have increased above our heads, and our trespass is grown up even unto heaven. Yet Thou hast not forsaken us in our bondage, but hast extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving to set up the house of our God, and to repair its desolation, and to establish us again in Judah and in Jerusalem. And now, what shall we say, O our God, after so many favours? for we have forsaken Thy commandments which Thou hast commanded us by Thy servants, the prophets, enjoining on us to keep ourselves apart from the strange people of these countries and their abominations, not to connect ourselves with them, so as not to be contaminated thereby. And we are nevertheless punished less severely than we have deserved, and Thou hast granted us this deliverance. And should we again break thy commandments and ally ourselves with these corrupt nations, wouldst thou not be angry with us, so as to consume us, so that not a remnant be left, and there be no escaping? O Lord, God of Israel, thou art righteous; for we are a remnant that hath escaped, as it is this day, and we appear before Thee laden with our trespass, and we dare not stand before Thee on account of this! Whilst Ezra was praying with fervour, and weeping before the Lord, a number of Israelites, men, women, and children were gathered together around him, and the people also wept bitterly. Then Shechaniah raised his voice and said to Ezra, We have indeed become guilty towards our God by taking strange women from among the

people of the land; but there is yet hope for Israel. Let us make a covenant with our God, and let us send away all these women, and so act in conformity to the law of God. Arise, for it is for thee to act; we also will assist thee; be firm, and do it. So Ezra arose and made the chiefs of the priests and of the Levites, and of all Israel, swear to do as had just been agreed upon, and they all swore to it. Then did Ezra assemble all the people, pointed out to them the enormity of the sin which they had committed in taking unto them strange wives, and repeated unto them the oath which had been taken to put them away. All the assembly answered, We will do according to thy words. They did, therefore, as they had promised, and Ezra, assisted by some of the principal families, succeeded in obtaining the execution of this measure.

IV. NECHEMYAH (NEHEMIAH)—HIS MISSION TO JERUSALEM.

THE words of Nehemiah, the son of Chachaliah. It was in the twentieth year of the reign of the King Artachshashtah, whilst I was in the capital Shushan, that Chanani, one of my friends, returned from Judea with several other men, and I asked them concerning the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem after the Babylonish captivity. And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province (in the land of Israel) are in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem, also, is in ruins, and its gates are burnt

with fire. And it came to pass when I had heard these words, that I sat down and wept and mourned for some time, and I fasted and prayed before the Lord of heaven and said, O Lord God of heaven, Thou great and terrible God, who keepest Thy covenant and favour unto those who love Thee and keep Thy commandments, let Thy ear, I pray, be open, and Thy eye be open, to hear the prayer of Thy servant, which I pray before Thee now day and night, on behalf of the children of Israel Thy servants. We have been very guilty towards Thee, and we have not observed the commandments and the statutes and ordinances, which Thou didst command to Thy servant Moses. But remember, I pray, the word which Thou didst likewise enjoin unto Moses, Thy servant, saying, If ye transgress I will scatter you abroad among the nations; but if ye return unto me and obey my commandments and do them, though your dispersed were at the farthermost ends of heaven, yet will I gather them then from there and bring them back unto the place which I have chosen, to let my name dwell therein. They are also Thy servants and Thy people, whom Thou redeemedst by Thy great power and by strong hand. O Lord, do let Thy ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant, and to the prayer of Thy servants, who desire to fear Thy name; and prosper Thy servant this day, and grant that he may obtain favour before this man (the king). As I was one day fulfilling my office near the king, whose cup-bearer I was, the king asked me the cause of my grief, as I was not sick, and this could be nothing else than sorrow of heart. I then said to him, Why should my countenance not be sad,

while the city, the burial-place of my fathers, is in ruins, and its gates are consumed by fire? Then the king said, What wishest thou in respect thereto? And I answered him, while imploring the Lord in my heart, If it please the king, and if thy servant find grace in thy sight, I would desire that thou shouldst send me unto Judah, to the city of my father's burial, that I may build it, and I would also wish to obtain letters to the governors of the province on the other side of the river, that they may convey me over till I come unto Judah. Also a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forests, that he may furnish me with the wood necessary for the building. The king granted all I asked him, and I departed, escorted by officers of the army and some horsemen, and I arrived at Jerusalem. Three days after my arrival I prepared for raising the walls and gates of the city. The people, their chiefs, and their princes assisted me in my undertaking, and the building was commenced. But a certain Sanballat, and other enemies of Judah and Benjamin, sought to hinder the work and to disturb the workmen so that the wall might not be raised again. They came with an armed band of Samaritans to disperse the workmen and to fight us. Now I employed in the labour of the building only half the young men and the other half I kept under arms, so as to be ready to repulse any attack. Even the workmen were armed, so that they held their swords in one hand and worked with the other. Thus, with the assistance of God, was the wall finished.

Now the common people and women complained greatly against the rich Jews their brethren, and said,

We are reduced to the greatest distress; we have no bread for our children; our vineyards and our fields are pledged; we have been forced to borrow money to pay the taxes of the king; and we are obliged to sell our sons and daughters as slaves, without a hope of ever redeeming them. This grieved me exceedingly. I reproached the princes and the chiefs, and I said to them, We have used all our efforts to redeem our brethren from the hands of the pagans, and will ye now again sell your brethren? Verily, what ye are doing is not good. Should ye not walk in the fear of the Lord, if it be only to avoid the reproaches of these nations, our enemies? I and my brothers also have lent the people money and corn, still let us release them from the debt. Do restore to them likewise, at once, their fields, their vineyards, their olive-groves and their houses; and remit the percentage for the money, the corn, the wine or the oil, which you have lent them. And they said, We will return everything, and we will require nothing from them; we will do as thou hast said. I then summoned the priests and I made them swear to do accordingly. I also shook out the lap of my coat, and said, May God thus shake out every man from his house and his acquisitions, who keepeth not this promise; even thus be he shaken out and empty. All the assembly said, Amen! and they praised the Lord; and all the people conformed to this promise.

V. ASSEMBLY OF THE PEOPLE—EZRA READS THE LAW TO THEM—GENERAL REPENTANCE—RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT.

THE first day of the seventh month, the people assembled and besought Ezra to bring in the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. Ezra, the priest, therefore, brought in the book of the law before the congregation, composed of men, women, and all those who could understand its contents. Then Ezra ascended a wooden stand, which they had erected for this purpose, and he opened the book in the view of all the people, for he stood higher than all of them, and as he opened it all the people stood up. And Ezra praised the Lord, and all the people, elevating their hands, answered, Amen! Amen! Then Ezra read the law from morning until noon; and the learned of the law, and the Levites, who stood at his right and left, interpreted and explained clearly to the people what he had read. Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites who explained the law, seeing that the people wept while hearing the reading of the law, said to them, This day is holy to the Lord your God; mourn not and weep not; but go eat good meats, drink sweet drinks, and send gifts to those who have nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord, and grieve not, but let the joy of the Lord be your strength. The people then withdrew to eat and to drink, to send away presents and to be merry. The next day the priest, the Levites, and the heads of

the families, returned to Ezra to study the words of the law; and as they found written therein, that the Lord had commanded through Moses, that in the feast of the seventh month, the Israelites should dwell in booths, they caused to be published in Jerusalem and in all the towns, Go into the mountains and bring thence olive branches, pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, to make the booths according as it is written. So the people made the booths, some on their roofs, some in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and others in the streets of the water gate, and of the gate of Ephraim, and they dwelt therein; and the people celebrated this feast with very great rejoicings. Also every day from the first to the seventh day, did they continue the reading of the law of God. Thus they celebrated the feast of booths seven days; and the eighth day was the solemn convocation according as it is written in the law. The twenty-fourth day of the same month, the children of Israel gathered together and fasted; they clothed themselves in sackcloth with earth upon their heads. They confessed their sins and the iniquity of their fathers. They also read the law of God during a fourth part of the day; and in another fourth part they acknowledged their transgressions, and bowed down in adoration before the Lord their God. And the Levites ascended the stand appropriated for the Levites, and besought the Lord. They cried out with a loud voice, Arise, praise the Lord your God, from everlasting to everlasting; and let men praise Thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing to praise. Thou art the Lord alone; Thou hast made the heavens, the

heavens of heavens, and all their host, the earth and all that is thereon, the seas and all that they contain; and Thou givest life to them all; and the host of heaven bow down before Thee. Thou art the Lord God, who didst make choice of Abram, and didst bring him out from Ur-Casdim, and call his name Abraham; and Thou didst find his heart true before Thee; and Thou didst make a covenant with him to give the land of Canaan to his descendants. And thou didst fulfil Thy words because Thou art righteous; and Thou didst behold the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and their cry thou didst hear at the Red Sea; and Thou didst deliver them with signs and wonders; Thou didst dry up before them the waters of the Red Sea, that they might pass through it on dry land, and Thou didst thrust their pursuers in the bottom of the mighty waters like a stone; Thou didst also guide them by day with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire; Thou didst then descend on Mount Sinai, and speak to them from out of heaven, and give them just ordinances, laws of truth, and good statutes and commandments. Thou didst farthermore make known to them Thy holy Sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, through Moses thy servant. Thou didst likewise give them food from heaven to nourish them, and water thou broughtest forth from the rock to quench their thirst; and Thou didst in the end command them to enter into the land which Thou hadst sworn to give unto them. Nevertheless they and our fathers were rebellious, and persisted with obstinacy in sin and did not obey Thy commandments. But in Thy infinite

mercy, Thou didst not forsake them; and their children took possession of this land, and conquered the cities, where they found everything in abundance, and by Thy great bounty, they became rich and fat; but they became corrupt and rebelled against Thee; rejected Thy law and sullied themselves with all sorts of crimes. Thou didst then deliver them into the hands of their enemies, and in their trouble they cried unto Thee; and Thou didst hear them from heaven and send them deliverers, who delivered them from their enemies. And when they had rest and they again did evil before Thee, Thou didst abandon them again unto the power of their enemies; but, in Thy great mercies, Thou didst hearken unto them, when they implored Thee anew, and didst deliver them many times. Thus, in Thy great mercy, hast Thou never made an end of them, nor entirely abandoned them; for Thou art a gracious and merciful God. And now, O our God! the great, the mighty and tremendous God! who keepest Thy covenant and art full of mercy, consider not lightly all the affliction which hath befallen us, our kings, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and all Thy people from the days of the kings of Asshur even to this day. Yet Thou art righteous in all that hath befallen us; for Thou hast acted truthfully, but we have done wickedly. Behold, we are this day servants; yes, in this land which Thou didst give to our fathers to eat its fruit and its good product, behold, we are slaves therein, and its increase is multiplied for the kings whom Thou hast set over us for our sins, and they rule at their pleasure, over our persons and our cattle, and we are in great distress.

Afterwards the chiefs of the priests and the Levites made a faithful covenant, which they wrote and signed for themselves, and for all the people. They bound themselves thus by an oath to walk in the law of God, which was given through Moses, the servant of God, and to observe and to do all the commandments of the Lord our God, together with his ordinances and statutes; not to intermarry with the nations of the earth; not to buy anything of strange merchants on Sabbath day and the holydays; to follow the laws relative to the Sabbatical year; to pay an annual tax for the service of the house of our God; and lastly, to offer the first fruits of each year, so as to provide comfortably for the maintenance of the priests, and generally to maintain the temple and the worship in a proper state.

VI. FEAST OF THE COMPLETION OF THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

When the walls of Jerusalem were finished, they summoned the Levites of all their cities to Jerusalem to celebrate there the feast of the consecration. The Levites all came to Jerusalem, and the consecration was celebrated with hymns and musical instruments. They offered on that day a great many sacrifices; and men, women, and children all gave themselves up to joy and festivity; for God had afforded them the happiness of seeing their walls restored. The cries of joy from Jerusalem were heard far and wide. On this day they likewise read the law of Moses, and they found therein written that no Ammonite or Moabite should be received into the congregation of God. When they heard these

words of the law they separated from Israel all the strangers of these nations.

About this time, said Nehemiah, I became aware that there were in Judah men who trod the wine-press on the Sabbath, and who brought wine, fruits, and other matters into Jerusalem on that day. I therefore reproached them bitterly for selling provisions on that day. The Tyrians who inhabited the city, brought there also fish and other wares which they sold on the Sabbath to the children of Judah and the people of Jerusalem. I remonstrated strongly with the principal men of Judah, and said to them, What evil thing is this which ye do to profane the Sabbath day? Is it not because your fathers acted thus that our God brought upon them and on this city all these evils? Do ye wish again to excite His anger against Israel by profaning the Sabbath? I then ordered that on the eve of the Sabbath the gates of Jerusalem should be shut as soon as the shadows began to increase, and not to be opened until after the Sabbath. I also placed some of my people to guard the gates, so that no burden might be brought in on the Sabbath day. Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares having remained several times without Jerusalem, close to the wall, I sent to forewarn them, threatening them that if they came displaying their goods near the walls of the city, I would employ force against them. From that time they returned no more on the Sabbath day. I gave orders to the Levites to purify themselves, and to guard well the gates, that the Sabbath might be properly observed. Remember me for this in thy favour, O my God, and protect according to the greatness of Thy mercy.

THE BOOK OF JONAH.

כפר יונה

I. THE FLIGHT OF JONAH—HE IS THROWN INTO THE SEA.

In the time of the reign of Jeroboam the Second, king of Israel, the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amithai, and said unto him, Arise, go to Nineveh, and cry out against it; for its wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah prepared himself to fly to Tarshish, to escape from the command of the Lord. So he went to Joppa, where he found a ship about to sail for Tarshish, and he paid his passage, and went on board. Then the Lord raised up a strong wind on the sea and a violent tempest arose, and the ship was in danger of foundering. Jonah went down into the hold of the vessel, where he lay down and slept soundly. The pilot thereupon approached him, and said, Why sleepest thou? arise, and pray to thy God; perhaps He will be propitious to us, that we perish not. But the crew of the vessel said one to another, Let us cast lots to find out who is the cause of this great misfortune: and they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. Then they

said unto him, Tell us, thou who art the cause of all this trouble to us, what is thy business? whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? But he answered them, I am a Hebrew, and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land. The men were then seized with a great terror, and they said unto him, What hast thou done? And when they heard that he had fled from before the Lord, for he confessed it to them, they said to him, What shall we do unto thee that the sea may become calm for us? for the waves rose and increased more and more. He, however, replied to them, Take me and throw me into the sea, and it shall become calm; for I know that it is on my account this violent tempest hath come over you. But the men strained to reach land, but they could not succeed; for the sea became more and more stormy. They then prayed to the Lord, and said, We beseech Thee, O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and let not innocent blood be required of us; for thou, O Lord, dost as it pleaseth Thee. They then seized Jonah, and threw him in the sea. And the raging of the sea was immediately hushed. So these men conceived a great veneration for the Lord, and they brought offerings in his honour, and made vows unto Him. Now the Lord sent a great fish which swallowed up Jonah, and he remained three days and three nights in the bowels of this fish, whence he addressed unto the Lord, his God, the following prayer.

I called from the midst of my distress unto Thee, O Lord, and Thou didst hear my voice; out of the depths of the grave I cried, and Thou hast heard my voice.

Thou hast cast me into the deep, in the heart of the sea, and the flood encompasseth me about; all thy billows and thy waves have passed over me. And I said, I am driven out before thy eyes; yet shall I again look toward the temple of thy holiness. The waters surrounded me to the peril of my life; the deep encompassed me about; seaweeds were bound around my head; I went down to the bottom of mountains; the earth closed her bars over me for ever, when Thou broughtest up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God! When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came unto Thee, unto thy holy temple. They that serve false vanities, forsake the source of their mercy.* But I will sacrifice unto Thee, with the voice of thanksgiving, that which I have vowed, will I pay; for salvation is of the Lord.

The Lord then ordered the fish, and it cast up Jonah on the land.

II. REPENTANCE OF THE INHABITANTS OF NINEVEH—GOD PARDONS THEM.

The word of the Lord came a second time to Jonah, and said, Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and proclaim unto her the proclamation which I shall bid thee. Jonah thereupon arose and went to Nineveh, according to the command of the Lord; now Nineveh was a very great city, a three days' journey in circumference. But Jonah

* This passage is rendered by Mr. Ennery: "Those who are fond of vain superstitions, soon abandon their ephemeral piety."

had only made one day's march into the city, and had cried out, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed! when the inhabitants of Nineveh, placing faith in his divine mission, proclaimed a fast, and clothed themselves in sackcloth, from the highest to the lowest. When the matter came unto the king, he descended from his throne, cast off his robes from him, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat upon ashes. He also issued a proclamation in Nineveh, By order of the king and his nobles, Let all men, and even the animals, oxen and sheep, abstain from all food and drink, and let all clothe themselves in mourning, and pray unto God; and let each man return from his evil ways, and let all give up what is wrongfully obtained in their hands. Who knoweth, but, peradventure, God may turn, and will have pity on us, and will stay his burning anger, that we shall not perish. And God saw their works, that they had turned from their evil ways, and He forgave them, and executed not the evil which He had resolved to do them.

Now Jonah was greatly annoyed and vexed thereat, and he prayed unto the Lord, saying, O Lord is not this what I said while I was yet in my own country, therefore I made haste to fly to Tarshish? for I know that Thou art a gracious and merciful God, long-suffering, and full of kindness, and repentant of the evil. And now, O Lord, take, I pray Thee, my life from me, for death is preferable to me than life. The Lord said to him, Is thy anger just? Jonah thereupon went out from the city, and sat down at the east side thereof, where he made himself a hut, under the shade of which he rested until he should see what would happen unto the city. Now

the Lord caused to grow upon that spot a gourd (a sort of plant with long leaves), which, rising above Jonah's head, covered him with its shade, and Jonah was highly pleased with it. But the next morning, at break of day, God sent a worm which gnawed the gourd, and it withered; and when the sun rose, God sent a strong east wind, and the sun darted its rays on Jonah's head, who, fainting with heat, prayed for death, saying, Death is preferable to me than life. Then God said to Jonah, Art thou reasonably angry for the loss of the gourd? and Jonah answered, I have a right to be angry even unto death. The Lord then said, Thou didst wish to spare the gourd for which thou didst not labour, and which thou didst not cause to grow, and which came in a night, and perished in a night; and should I not spare Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than twelve times ten thousand persons who know not yet the right from the left,* and an immense number of cattle?

* That is to say, the children, innocent of the errors of their parents, who, moreover, had since repented.

THE BOOK OF JOB.

ספר איוב

I. THE PROSPERITY AND RICHES OF JOB—HIS GRATITUDE TO GOD—HIS PIOUS RESIGNATION UNDER ADVERSITY.

In the land of Utz there lived a man named Job. This man was just, pious, fearing God, and eschewing evil. He had seven sons and three daughters; he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she asses, and had a very great household; so that he was the richest man in all the East. When his children were assembled together at a feast, Job sent to them to exhort them to piety, and in the morning he offered peace-offerings for each of them; for he thought within himself, Peradventure my children have sinned and offended God in their heart. Such was Job's daily conduct. One day, it happened that the sons of God had gathered together, and that Satan was also among them; and the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? and Satan answered, From the earth, which I have traversed through. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou observed well my servant Job, who hath not his equal on earth for uprightness and

justice, fearing God and eschewing evil? Satan then answered the Lord, Is it then for nothing that Job feareth God? hast Thou not always protected him, his house, and all that belongeth to him? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his wealth has spread out far in the land. But now stretch out thy hand, and touch what he possesses; and then Thou wilt see whether he wilt not blaspheme against Thee to thy face. The Lord then said to Satan, I give thee power over all that he hath; but lay not thy hand upon him. Satan therefore withdrew from the presence of the Lord. And it happened one day, as the sons and daughters of Job were eating and drinking, at the house of their eldest brother, that a messenger came unto Job, and said to him, The oxen were ploughing in the field, and the asses were feeding near them, when a band of Sebaans fell upon them, carrying them all away, and slaying the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell thee of it. Whilst he was yet speaking, another one came and said, A fire from heaven descended and burnt up all the sheep and their shepherds; and I alone have escaped to tell it to thee. Whilst he was yet speaking, another came and said, The Chaldeans, divided into three bands, surprised the camels, and took them away, and slew the young men with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell it to thee. He was yet speaking, when another came and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were assembled at a feast at the house of their eldest brother, when a violent tempest arose from the desert, and so shook the house at its four corners, that it fell upon the young people and crushed them to death, and I alone have escaped to tell it thee. Job then

arose, rent his garments, cut his hair, fell on his face to the ground, and adored the Lord, saying, Naked I was at my birth, and naked shall I return unto the earth; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Notwithstanding all that had befallen him, Job sinned not, and uttered no blasphemy against God.

II. THE SUFFERINGS OF JOB DO NOT SHAKE HIS FAITH.

It happened again on another day, when the sons of God were come before the Lord, that Satan also came among them; and the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? And he answered, From the earth, which I have roamed over and wandered through. The Lord then said to him, Hast thou noted well my servant Job, whose equal is not on earth, as he is upright and just, fearing God and eschewing evil? And he perseveres still in his integrity, although thou wouldst incite me to destroy him without cause. But Satan replied, A man will willingly yield up everything to save his own life. Stretch forth, however, thy hand, and smite him in his bones and in his flesh, will he then refrain from blaspheming Thee to thy face? The Lord then said to Satan, Behold, his person too is in thy power, only spare his life. Satan, therefore, retired from before the Lord, and smote Job with malignant sores, from the sole of his feet to the crown of his head. Job seated himself among the ashes, and picked up a potsherd to scratch himself therewith. His wife then said to him, Dost thou still

persevere in thy integrity? Curse God and die! but he said to her, Thou speakest like an impious woman; should we receive the good alone from God, and refuse to receive the evil? Thus did Job not sin with his lips. Three friends of Job, Eliphaz the Themanite, Bildad the Shusite, and Zophar the Naamite, having heard of the calamities that had befallen him, came to see him, to condole and to comfort him. And when they perceived him from afar without recognising him, they lifted up their voice and wept, and they rent their garments and scattered ashes upon their heads. They remained sitting near him on the ground seven days and seven nights, without uttering a word; for they saw that his pain was very great.

III. THE LAMENTATIONS OF JOB.

Job at last opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. Job commenced and said:

O that the day might perish on which I was born, and the night when it was said, She hath conceived a male child. Let that day be darkened; may not God from above give it his regard, and let no light beam upon it. O that darkness and the shadow of death might deform it! may a cloud rest upon it; the pestilential plague render it a day of terror. Yon night, let darkness seize it, let it not be united to the days of the year, not come among the periods lighted by the moon. Lo! may that night be solitary; may no song of joy be heard thereon. Let them denounce it who curse their day, who are ready to awake their sorrow. Let the

stars of its twilight be darkened; may it hope for light, and there be none; and let it not behold the eyelids of the morning dawn. Because it closed not unto me the gates of the womb, and thus concealed trouble from my eyes. Why did I not die as soon as I left the womb, perish when newly born? Why were knees ready to receive me, and breasts that I might suck? For then I should now have lain still and be quiet; I should have slept and been at rest, with kings and counsellors of the earth, who build up ruined places unto themselves, or with princes possessing gold, that had filled their houses with silver; or that I had been as nothing, like a hidden abortion; as babes that never saw the light. Where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary of strength are at rest. Together repose in peace chained prisoners, they hear not the taskmaster's voice. The small and the great are there; the servant too, now free from his master. Wherefore giveth He the unhappy ones light, and life to those bitter in spirit? who long for death and it cometh not, and who would dig for it sooner than for treasures? who would exult for joy, be glad if they found but a grave? Yea, wherefore is life given to the man who cannot escape from affliction, whom God hath debarred from joy? For before my meal my sighing cometh, and like waterfalls issue forth my complaints. For what I feared hath come upon me, and what I dreaded hath reached me. I had no safety, and I had no rest, and I had no quiet, and now harassing trouble hath come.

IV. THE FRIENDS OF JOB STRIVE TO COMFORT HIM— GOD AT LAST REPLIES TO JOB.

THE three friends of Job answered him each according to his opinion and his understanding, to console him in his grief, and to awaken his hope, by refuting the complaints which he had uttered; but Job answered them on every occasion by speeches and sentiments which he opposed to their reasonings; so that they could not succeed in convincing him. Then the Lord himself spoke to Job from the midst of a storm, and said to him, Who is this that findeth fault with my counsel with words devoid of reason? Gird up thy loins like a man, and I will ask thee and do thou instruct me. Where wast thou when I founded the earth? speak, if thou understandeth it well. Who took the measure thereof, if thou knowest, or who stretched the measuring rod over it? On what are based its foundation pillars; or, who laid its corner stone? when together sang the stars of the morning, and joyfully shouted all the sons of God? Who closed up with doors the sea, when it issued forth coming from the deep? when I madest a cloud its garments and thick fog its cover; and imposed on it my law, and set it bars and doors, and said, Hitherto thou mayest come, but no farther, and here shall be stayed the pride of thy waves. Didst thou in all thy life command the morning? Didst thou assign the morning its place, to lay hold of the corners of the earth, to shake off the wicked therefrom? Then the impress of things is

changed like clay, and they stand as if newly clad. But from the wicked is withheld their light, and the uplifted arm is broken. Didst thou ever go to the springs of the sea or wander in the bottom of the deep? Were the gates of death laid open to thee, or didst thou ever see the gates of the shadow of death? Didst thou ever understand the extent of the earth? tell if thou knowest it all. Which is the way to where the light dwelleth, and darkness—where is its place? that thou couldst lead each to its boundary, and understand the path to its house? Thou knowest it, because then thou wast already born, and the number of thy days is great. Didst thou ever enter into the treasuries of the snow, or see the treasuries of hail which I reserve for the time of strife, for the day of fight and battle? Which way travelleth the divided light which the east wind scattereth over the earth? Who divided off the water-courses for the overflowing rain, or made a way for the lightning and thunder? to send rain upon a land devoid of man, in deserts uninhabited by sons of earth? to satisfy waste barrens, and to bring forth the tender grass? Hath the rain a father? or who begot the drops of dew? From whose womb came forth the ice? or who gave birth to the hoar frost of heaven? Like a stone the waters are hardened, and the face of the deep is bound with ice. Canst thou bind the chain of the Pleiades, or loosen the bands of Orion? Canst thou lead forth the Zodiac stars each in its season, and guide the bear with its young? Knowest thou the laws of heaven, or canst thou appoint a ruler over it on earth? Canst thou raise thy voice to the clouds, and cause thyself to be covered with abun-

dance of water? Canst thou send out lightnings, that they go, and say to thee, Here are we? Who put wisdom in the inward parts, or who gave understanding to the imagination? Who numbereth the clouds in wisdom, and who emptieth out the bottles of heaven, when the moistened dust becometh closely joined, and the clods are made to cleave together? Dost thou hunt for the lioness her prey, and supply the food for the young lions, when they lie crouched in their lairs, rest in their dens for prey? Who provideth provision for the raven, when his young ones cry to God, flitting about for lack of food?

V. JOB HUMBLES HIMSELF BEFORE THE INFINITE WISDOM AND OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD—HE ACKNOWLEDGES THE NOTHINGNESS OF MAN AND THE VANITY OF HIS JUDGMENTS—GOD REWARDS HIM BY RESTORING HIM THE DOUBLE OF WHAT HE HAD LOST—JOB DIES IN A HAPPY OLD AGE.

Job answered the Lord and said, I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withheld from Thee. Who would dare to blame Thy counsel without knowledge? Verily, I have spoken without understanding of things wonderful for me, which I knew not. But deign to listen to me and I will speak; I will ask Thee that Thou mayst instruct me. Hitherto, I had only heard of Thee, but now my own eye hath seen Thee. Wherefore do I now reject all I uttered, and I repent in dust and ashes.

After having spoken to Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Themanite, My wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me as correctly as hath my servant Job. Now, therefore, take seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job and offer them for you as burnt-offerings, and my servant Job shall pray for you; for I will hear his prayer and will not punish you, that you have not spoken properly of me. The three friends of Job did as the Lord had commanded them. The Lord also heard Job's prayer on their behalf. Now while Job was praying for his friends, the Lord restored to him two-fold the wealth he had lost. All his brethren, his sisters, and all those who had known him before, came to eat with him, to comfort him for all the afflictions which the Lord had sent upon him; and every one presented him with a piece of silver and a gold ring. The Lord farther-more prospered Job more than he had done before, and he now had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And in all the land there was not to be found any women so handsome as Job's daughters. Their father gave them an inheritance with their brothers; and Job lived after this one hundred and forty years: he saw his children and his children's children to the fourth genera-tion, and died aged and full of years.

APPENDIX.

Besides the fifteen books of which we have given an abridgment, the Bible contains still nine more; for the Holy Writings are comprised in twenty-four books, divided into three parts, to wit:—

תורה נביאים כתובים

The first part, תורה, the Law, or תורת משה, the Law of Moses, contains five books, whence the name of חומש, or Pentateuch, which means five books.

The second part, נביאים, the Prophets, contains eight books, to wit, Joshua, the Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the book of the twelve minor prophets who prophesied successively from the time of Elisha until Ezra, that is to say, from about 3080 to 3420 after the Creation. The names of these twelve prophets are Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Michah, Nahum, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

The third part, כתובים, Hagiographa, or Holy Writings, is composed of eleven books, namely, the Psalms, the Proverbs of Solomon, the Book of Job, the Song of Solomon, the Book of Ruth, the Lamentations

of Jeremiah, Ecclesiastes, the Book of Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Chronicles.

The Book of Isaiah, כפר ישעיה, is composed of sixty-six chapters, and contains menaces against the corruption of the Israelites, whom the prophet exhorts to return to the ways of justice and piety, predicting to them a return of God's benediction. This book, so highly sublime in its language, is remarkable for the boldness and beauty of its metaphors. Isaiah prophesied in the time of the kings of Judah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

The Book of Jeremiah, כפר ירמיה, contains fifty-two chapters. This prophet, who lived in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, deplores the misfortunes and corruptions of his people, and the ruin of Jerusalem. All his discourses, his prophecies, and all his energies are devoted entirely to the prosperity of his nation.

The Book of Ezekiel, כפר יחזקאל, is composed of forty-eight chapters. The prophet relates therein the divine apparitions and celestial visions he had seen. He exhorts sinners to return unto God, and promises pardon for their transgressions to those who will forsake their evil ways. Ezekiel was contemporaneous with Nebuchadnezzar and Jeremiah. He was one of the captives carried to Babylon.

The Psalms, כפר תהלים, sacred hymns by King David and other divine singers, owe their origin to faith, hope, and piety. These holy songs, of which it is impossible to give the sublime beauties in a translation, are in number one hundred and fifty. Several form part of our daily prayers. The translation of a few, of which we recommend the frequent reading to our brethren, will

contribute, we hope, to their edification. May all our readers, males and females, be penetrated with the sentiments which this divine poetry inspires.

Psalm xv.

Lord, who shall dare to sojourn in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy mountain? He that walketh uprightly, and executeth righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart; he that slandereth not with his tongue; who doeth not evil unto his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour; he whose eyes despise those who are vile, but who honoureth them that fear the Lord, and who keepeth his oath even when it is to his own injury; he who lendeth not his money upon interest, and receiveth no bribe against the innocent; he that doth this shall never be moved.

Psalm xxiii.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He causeth me to lie down in pastures of tender grass; he leadeth me gently by tranquil streams, he refresheth my soul, he guideth me in the path of righteousness; for the sake of his name. Yea, though I should walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and thy staff will comfort me. Thou preparest a table for me in the presence of my enemies; Thou anointest with oil my head, my cup overfloweth. Surely goodness and mercy

shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord, to the utmost length of days.

Psalm xxxvii.

Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, nor be jealous of those who work iniquity; for, like the grass they shall be speedily cut down, and like the green herbage shall they wither. Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land, and maintain uprightness. And find thy delights in the Lord, and He will grant thee the desires of thy heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord, and trust in Him, and He will bring it to pass. And He will bring forth like the light thy righteousness; and thy cause as the noonday. And submit in silence unto the Lord, and wait for Him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, of the man who is successful in his evil designs. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath, and fret not thyself, it is only evil. For evil-doers shall be cut off; but those who wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth.

For yet a little while and the wicked is no more, and thou lookest about for his place and he is not there. But the meek shall possess the land, and they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The wicked plotteth against the just, and he gnasheth against him his teeth. The Lord will laugh at him; for He seeth that his day is coming.

The wicked draw the sword, and bend their bow to cast down the poor and the needy; to slay those whose

walk is upright; but their sword shall enter their own heart, and their bows shall be broken.

The little which the righteous hath is better than the great riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

The Lord observeth the days of the innocent; and their inheritance will be for ever. They shall not be made ashamed in time of evil; and in the days of famine shall they be satisfied. For the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord are like the glory of the fields, they vanish, in smoke they vanish. The wicked borroweth, but repayeth not; but the righteous is merciful, and giveth. For those who are blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, and they who are cursed by Him shall be cut off. Through the Lord are the steps of a good man established, and He delighteth in his way. Even should he fall he shall not be cast down; for the Lord supporteth his hand.

I have been young, I have also become old, and I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging for bread. He is ever benevolent, and lendeth, and his offspring are blessed.

Depart from evil, and do good, and thou shalt dwell for evermore. For the Lord loveth justice, and forsaketh not his righteous ones; they are preserved for ever, but the seed of the wicked is cut off. The righteous shall inherit the earth, and dwell for ever thereon. The mouth of the righteous uttereth wisdom, and his tongue speaketh what is just; the law of his God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slip.

The wicked watcheth for the righteous and seeketh to

slay him. The Lord will not leave him in his hands, nor condemn him when he is judged.

Wait on the Lord and keep his way, and He will exalt thee to inherit the land; thou shalt look on when the wicked are cut off.

I have seen a wicked man in power, spreading himself like a deep-rooted tree: and men passed by, and behold, he was no more, and I sought him, but he could not be found.

Mark well the innocent man and observe the upright; for there is a happy future for the man of peace; and transgressors will be destroyed together; the future of the wicked is cut off.

But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord, He is their strength in the time of trouble.

And the Lord will help them, and He will deliver them; He will deliver them from the wicked and save them because they trust in Him.

Psalm lxv.

Praise is meet for Thee, O God! in Zion, and unto Thee shall the vows be performed. O hearer of prayer, unto Thee all flesh shall come. Iniquitous deeds overcome me; our transgressions, do Thou atone for them. Happy is he whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach, that he may dwell in Thy courts. Let us be satisfied with the good things of Thy house, the sanctuary of Thy temple. Through fearful deeds will Thou answer us in righteousness, God of our salvation, the trusty refuge of all the ends of the earth and of the

sea, which are afar off. He setteth up the mountains by his strength; He is girded with might; He stilleth the roaring of the seas, the roar of their billows, and the tumult of the people. Therefore are the inhabitants of the uttermost part afraid because of Thy signs; Thou causest the outgoings of morning and the evening to rejoice. Thou visitest the earth and waterest it; Thou enrichest it; the stream of God is full of water; Thou providest their corn when Thou hast thus prepared it (the earth). Moisten its furrows abundantly; settle its ridges; soften it with showers; bless what groweth on it. Thou crownest the year of Thy goodness; and thy paths drop with fatness. The pastures of the wilderness are dropping, and the hills are girt with rejoicing. The field-lands are clothed in with sheep, and the valleys are enveloped with corn. Men shout for joy, yea, they also sing.

Psalm cxxxix.

O Lord, Thou hast searched and knowest me. Thou knowest my sitting down and my rising up; Thou understandest my thoughts afar off. My path and my couch Thou regardest, and all my ways Thou hast scanned; for there is not a word on my tongue, but lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it entirely. Behind and before Thou hast closed me in, and Thou hast laid Thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is exalted, that I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from before Thy spirit? and whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up unto heaven, Thou art

there; if I make the grave my bed, behold! Thou art there. If I should bear myself away on the wings of the morning dawn, should I dwell in the extreme ends of the sea: even there Thy hand would lead me, and Thy right hand would lay hold of me. And if I said, Yea, darkness shall conceal me, then would the night be a light around me. For the darkness rendereth nothing dark before Thee; and night shineth like the day; darkness is equal to the light. For Thou possessest my reins, (that is, to-day Thou knowest what passeth in my heart and in all my body,) Thou didst cover me in my mother's womb. I will praise Thee that I am so wonderfully distinguished; marvellous are Thy works and my soul knoweth it well. My substance was not hidden from Thee, when I was made in secret, fashioned in the lowest depths of the earth. Thy eyes beheld my rude mass, and in Thy books were written all which should at some future day be formed before one of them was there. And how precious are unto me Thy thoughts, O God! how mighty is their number! Should I count them, they would be more numerous than the sand; I awake and still am with Thee. Search me, O God, and know my heart; probe me and know my thoughts; and see if there be in me a way of grief, and lead me in the way of everlasting (life).

The Proverbs of Solomon משלי שלמה are a collection of wise maxims and moral precepts, the reading of which can have only a happy influence on the character and conduct of man. This book is divided into thirty-one chapters. We extract therefrom the following sentences:

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge:

fools only despise wisdom and instruction. The fear of the Lord is the source of life; it teaches us to avoid the snares of death. Trust in God with all thy heart, and depend not on thy own understanding. My son, despise not the chastisement of the Lord, nor be weary of his correction. For whom the Lord loveth, He correcteth, and as a father, the son in whom he hath delight. Give no occasion for slander; remove far from thee all evil-speaking. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but its end are the ways of death. Above all, watch over thy heart; for from it are the springs of life. The wise man foreseeth evil and avoideth it; but fools pass on and are punished. Boast not of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. Who can say, I have purified my heart? I am free from sin? A good name is better than riches; better to be beloved than to possess gold and silver. Let others praise thee, but not thy own tongue. Pride rendereth man contemptible; and an humble spirit will acquire honour. Whoever talketh much cannot avoid error; and he who governeth his tongue is wise. Death and life are in the power of the tongue. A soft word turneth away wrath; but an angry answer kindleth it. Dry bread eaten in peace is better than a feast in a house where discord reigneth. Better to possess a little in the fear of God than much riches with a troubled conscience. An open reproof is better than a concealed friendship. Obey thy father who begat thee; and honour thy mother in her old age. Act so that thy father and mother may rejoice in thee, and that those who have brought thee up may rejoice. He who robbeth his father

or his mother, saying, It is no sin, is a companion of a robber. If thy enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; and, (although while so doing,) thou heapest burning coals on his head, the Lord will repay it to thee. He who is kind unto the poor, lendeth to the Lord; and He will give him his reward. The generous man is blessed; for he giveth his bread to the poor. He that shutteth his ear to the cry of the indigent, shall one day cry and not be heard. The righteous man spareth even his beast; the wicked is cruel even to his relative. Rich and poor meet together; God is the Maker of both.

Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, קהלת contains philosophic and moral reflections of the son of David. This book, divided into twelve chapters, is remarkable for the great wisdom which its contents manifest. It finishes with this proposition, which ought to serve to all as a rule of life, THE END OF ALL THINGS IS, FEAR GOD, AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS; FOR THIS IS THE END OF MAN.

The Song of Solomon שיר השירים, is an allegorical poem divided into eight songs or eclogues, remarkable for their poetical simplicity.

The Lamentations איכה, is an affecting elegy of the prophet Jeremiah on the destruction of Jerusalem and the downfall of his nation.

The two Books of Chronicles דברי הימים, contain a succinct account of the whole sacred history; the first book contains twenty-nine, and the second thirty-six chapters.

These are the different books which constitute the Holy Writings; but there are yet some others, relating

to the ancient history of our nation, which are called the APOCRYPHA, that is to say, books, the origin of which is unknown, and which bear not the same stamp of authenticity as the former. Wherefore they have not in our eyes the same sanctity as the BIBLE.

These books are:

The Book of Judith, a recital of the devotion of the heroic Judith, who saved the town of Bethulia, which was besieged by Holofernes, captain of the army of Nebuchadnezzar. This courageous Israelitish female, fortified by her trust in God, went into the camp of Holofernes at night and cut off his head, which she brought with her to Bethulia. The success of this perilous enterprise animated the courage of the Israelites, and spread dismay in the enemy's camp, which the besieged soon attacked with impetuosity. The Assyrians, dismayed at the loss of their chief, fled, and Bethulia was saved.

The Wisdom of Solomon, which is a collection of sentences and precepts suitable for kings and princes.

The Book of Tobit, which is an interesting narrative of the pious conduct and virtues of Tobit, who was taken captive after the conquest of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmanesser.

The Book of Sirach, which is analogous to the Book of Proverbs of Solomon.

The Book of Baruch, which contains the epistles which Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah wrote from Egypt, where they were captives together, to their brethren in Jerusalem.

The History of Susanna and of Daniel.

Lastly, the two Books of the Maccabees, which contain the history of the illustrious family of the Maccabees, also called Hasmoneans, whose brilliant victories drove Antiochus Epiphanes from Jerusalem, where this tyrant had exerted himself, by persecutions and tortures, to introduce the abominable idolatry of the Syrians. It is in memory of this deliverance, and of the purification of the temple, defiled by Antiochus, that we celebrate yearly the Feast of Dedication חנוכה, on the 25th of Kislev, the anniversary of that happy event.

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